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THE MAHABHARATA

KRISHNA-DWAIPAYANA ~~MYTHS~~

TRANSLATED

INTO

ENGLISH PROSE.

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The king of Mithilā will tell thee everything for thy Emancipation.⁶—Bearing the command of his sire, O king, Cuka proceeded to Mithilā for enquiring of its king about the truth of duties and the Refuge of Emancipation.⁷ Before he set out, his sire further told him,—Do thou go thither by that path which ordinary human beings take. Do not have recourse to thy Yoga-puissance for “proceeding through the skies.—At this Cuka was not at all surprised (for he was humble by nature).⁸ He was further told that he should proceed thither with simplicity and not from desire of pleasure.—Along your way do not seek for friends and spouses, since friends and spouses are causes of attachment to the world.⁹ Although the ruler of Mithilā is one in whose sacrifices we officiate, still thou shouldst not indulge in any feeling of superiority while living with him. Thou shouldst live under his direction and in obedience to him. Even he will dispel all thy doubts.*¹⁰ That king is well versed in all duties and well acquainted with the scriptures on Emancipation. He is one for whom I officiate in sacrifices. Thou shouldst, without any scruple, do what he bids.¹¹—Thus instructed, the righteous-souled Cuka proceeded to Mithilā on foot although he was able to traverse through the skies over the whole Earth with her seas.¹² Crossing many hills and mountains, many rivers, many waters and lakes, and many woods and forests abounding with beasts of prey and other animals,¹³ crossing the two *Varshas* of Meru and Hari successively and next the *Varsha* of Himavat, he came at last to the *Varsha* known by the name of Bharata.¹⁴ Having seen many countries inhabited by Chins and Huns, the great ascetic at last reached Āryāvarta.¹⁵ In obedience to the commands of his sire and bearing them constantly in his mind, he gradually passed along his way on the Earth

* Vyāsa was the priest or Ritwija of the house of Mithilā and as such the kings of Mithilā were his ‘Yājnyas’ or ‘Yajamānas.’ The duty of a ‘Yajamāna’ is to reverence every member of the priest’s family. The sire, therefore, cautions the son that he should not, while living with the king of Mithilā, assert his superiority over him in any respect.—T.

like a bird passing through the air.¹⁶ Passing through many delightful towns and populous cities, he saw diverse kinds of wealth without waiting to observe them.¹⁷ On his way he passed through many delightful gardens and planes and many sacred waters.¹⁸ Before much time had passed he reached the country of the Videhas that was protected by the virtuous and high-souled Janaka.¹⁹ There he beheld many populous villages, and many kinds of food and drink and viands and habitations of cowherds swelling with men and many herds of cattle.²⁰ He beheld many fields abounding with paddy and barley and other grain, and many lakes and waters inhabited by swans and cranes and adorned with beautiful lotuses.²¹ Passing through the Videha country teeming with well-to-do people, he arrived at the delightful gardens of Mithilā rich with many species of trees.²² Abounding with elephants and horses and cars, and peopled by men and women, he passed through them without waiting to observe any of the things that were presented to his eye.²³ Bearing that burthen in his mind and ceaselessly dwelling upon it (*viz.*, the desire of mastering the religion of Emancipation), Cuka of cheerful soul and taking delight in internal survey only, reached Mithilā at last.²⁴ Arrived at the gate, he sent word through the keepers. Endued with tranquillity of mind, devoted to contemplation and Yoga, he entered the city, having obtained permission.²⁵ Proceeding along the principal street abounding with well-to-do men, he reached the king's palace and entered it without any scruples.²⁶ The porters forbade him with rough words. Thereat, Cuka, without any anger, stopped and waited.²⁷ Neither the sun nor the long distance he had walked had fatigued him in the least. Neither hunger, nor thirst, nor the exertion he had made, had weakened him. The heat of the Sun had not scorched or pained or distressed him in any degree.²⁸ Among those porters there was one who felt compassion for him, beholding him staying there like the midday Sun in his effulgence.²⁹ Worshipping him in due form and saluting him properly, with joined hands he led him to the first chamber of the palace.³⁰ Seated there, Cuka, O son,

began to think of Emancipation only. Possessed of equable splendour he looked with an equal eye upon a shaded spot and one exposed to the Sun's rays.³¹ Very soon after, the king's minister, coming to that place with joined hands, led him to the second chamber of the palace.³² That chamber led to a spacious garden which formed a portion of the inner apartments of the palace. It looked like a second Chaitraratha. Beautiful pieces of water occurred here and there at regular intervals. Delightful trees, all of which were in their flowering season, stood in that garden.³³ Be-
vies of damsels, of transcendent beauty, were in attendance. The minister led Cuka from the second chamber to that delightful spot. Ordering those damsels to give the ascetic a seat, the minister left him there.³⁴ Those well-dressed damsels were of beautiful features, possessed of excellent hips, young in ears, clad in red robes of fine texture, and decked with many ornaments of burnished gold.³⁵ They were well skilled in agreeable conversation and maddening revelry, and thorough mistresses of the arts of dancing and singing. Always opening their lips with smiles, they were equal to the very Apsarās in beauty.³⁶ Well-skilled in all the acts of dalliance, competent to read the thoughts of men upon whom they wait, possessed of every accomplishment, fifty damsels, of a very superior order and of easy virtue, surrounded the ascetic.³⁷ Presenting him with water for washing his feet, and worshipping him respectfully with the offer of the usual articles, they gratified him with excellent viands agreeable to the season.³⁸ After he had eaten, those damsels then, one after another, singly led him through the grounds, showing him every object of interest, O Bhārata.³⁹ Sporting and laughing and singing, those damsels, conversant with the thoughts of all men, entertained that auspicious ascetic of noble soul.⁴⁰ The pure-souled ascetic born in the fire-sticks, observant without scruples of any kind of his duties, having all his senses under complete control, and a thorough master of his wrath, was neither pleased nor angered at all this.⁴¹ Then those foremost of beautiful women gave him an excellent seat.⁴² Washing

his feet and other limbs, Cuka said his evening prayers, sat on that excellent seat, and began to think of the object for which he had come there.³ In the first part of the night, he devoted himself to Yoga. The puissant ascetic, passed the middle portion of the night in sleep.⁴ Very soon waking up from his slumber, he went through the necessary rites of cleansing his body, and though surrounded by those beautiful women, he once again devoted himself to Yoga.⁵ It was in this way, O Bhārata, that the son of the Island-born Krishna passed the latter part of that day and the whole of that night in the palace of king Janaka.’⁶

SECTION CCCXXVII.

“Bhishma said,—‘The next morning, king Janaka, O Bhārata, accompanied by his minister and the whole household, came to Cuka, placing his priest in the van.¹ Bringing with him costly seats and diverse kinds of jewells and gems, and bearing the ingredients of the *Arghya* on his own head, the monarch approached the son of his reverend preceptor.² The king, taking with his own hands, from the hands of his priest, that seat adorned with many gems, overlaid with an excellent sheet, beautiful in all its parts, and exceedingly costly, presented it with great reverence to his preceptor’s son Cuka.’³ After the son of (the Island-born) Krishna had taken his seat on it, the king worshipped him according to prescribed rites. At first offering him water to wash his feet, he then presented him the *Arghya* and kine.⁴ The ascetic accepted that worship offered with due rites and *mantras*. That foremost of regenerate persons, having thus accepted the worship offered by the king,⁵ and taking the kine also that were presented to him, then saluted the monarch. Possessed of great energy, he next enquired after the king’s welfare and prosperity.⁶ Indeed, O king, Cuka embraced in his enquiry the welfare of the monarch’s followers and officers also. Receiving Cuka’s permission, Janaka sat down with all his followers.⁷ Endued with a high soul and possessed of high birth, the monarch, with joined hands, sat down

on the bare ground and enquired after the welfare and unabated prosperity of Vyāsa's son.⁹ The monarch then asked his guest the object of his visit.¹⁰

“Cuka said,—Blessed be thou, my sire said unto me that his Yajamāna, the ruler of the Videhas, known all over the world by the name of Janaka, is well versed in the religion of Emancipation.¹¹ He commanded me to come to him without delay, if I had any doubts requiring solution in the matter of the religion of either Pravritti or Nivritti. He gave me to understand that the king of Mithilā would dispel all my doubts.¹² I have, therefore, come hither, at the command of my sire, for the purpose of taking lessons from thee. It behooveth thee, O foremost of all righteous persons, to instruct me!¹³ What are the duties of a Brāhmana, and what is the essence of those duties that have Emancipation for their object. How also is Emancipation to be obtained? Is it obtainable by the aid of knowledge or by that of penances?—¹⁴

“Janaka said,—Hear what the duties are of a Brāhmana from the time of his birth. After his investiture, O son, with the sacred thread, he should devote his attention to the study of the Vedas.¹⁵ By practising penances and dutifully serving his preceptor and observing the duties of Brahmacharyya, O puissant one, he should pay off the debt he owes to the deities and the Pitris, and cast off all malice.¹⁶ Having studied the Vedas with close attention and subjugated his senses, and having given his preceptor the tuition-fee, he should, with the permission of his preceptor, return home.¹⁷ Returning home, he should betake himself to the domestic mode of life and wedding a spouse confine himself to her, and live freeing himself from every kind of malice, and having established his domestic fire.¹⁸ Living, in the domestic mode, he should procreate sons and grandsons. After that, he should retire to the forest, and continue to worship the same fires and entertain guests with cordial hospitality.¹⁹ Living righteously in the forest, he should at last establish his fire in his soul, and freed from all pairs of opposites, and casting off all attachments from the soul, he should pass his

days in the mode called Sannyāsa which is otherwise called the mode of Brahma.—²⁰

“Cuka said,—If one succeeds in attaining to an understanding cleansed by study of the scriptures and to true conceptions of all things, and if the heart succeeds in freeing itself permanently from the effects of all pairs of opposites, is it still necessary for such a person to adopt, one after another, the three modes of life called Brahmacharyya, Gārhistya, and Vānaprastha?²¹ This is what I ask thee. It behooveth thee to tell me. Indeed, O ruler of men, do tell me this according to the true import of the Vedas !—”²²

“Janaka said,—Without the aid of an understanding cleansed by study of the scriptures and without that true conception of all things which is known by the name of Vijnāna, the attainment of Emancipation is impossible. That cleansed understanding, again, it is said, is unattainable without one's connection with a preceptor.²³ The preceptor is the helmsman, and knowledge is the boat (aided by whom and which one succeeds in crossing the ocean of the world). After having acquired that boat, one becomes crowned with success. Indeed, having crossed the ocean, one may abandon both.²⁴ For preventing the destruction of all the worlds and for preventing the destruction of acts (upon which the worlds depend), the duties appertaining to the four modes of life were practised by the wise of old.²⁵ By abandoning acts, good and bad, agreeably to this order of acts, one succeeds, in course of many births, in attaining to Emancipation.²⁶ That man who, through penances performed in course of many births, succeeds in obtaining a cleansed mind and understanding and soul, certainly becomes able to attain to Emancipation (in a new birth) in even the very first mode, (*viz.*, Brahmacharyya).†²⁷ When, having attained to a cleansed understanding, Emancipation becomes his and

* It is certain that one must abandon all acts before one can attain to Emancipation. But then acts should not be cast off all at once. It is according to this order that they should be abandoned, *i. e.*, in the order of the several modes.—T.

† The ‘*karanas*’ are the inner faculties.—T.

in consequence thereof he becomes possessed of knowledge in respect of all visible things, what desirable object is there to attain by observing the three other modes of life?*** One should always cast off faults born of the attributes of Rajas and Tamas. Adhering to the path of Sattwa, one should know Self by Self.†²⁹ Beholding one's self in all creatures and all creatures in one's self, one should live (without being attached to anything) like aquatic animals living in water without being drenched by that element.³⁰ He who succeeds in transcending all pairs of attributes and resisting their influence, succeeds in casting off all attachments, and attains to infinite felicity in the next world, going thither like a bird soaring into the sky from below.³¹ In this connection, there is a saying sung of old by king Yayāti and borne in remembrance, O sire, by all persons conversant with the scriptures bearing upon Emancipation.³² The effulgent ray (i. e., the Supreme Soul) exists in one's Soul and not anywhere else. It exists equally in all creatures. One can see it oneself if one's heart be devoted to Yoga.³³ When a person lives in such a way that another is not inspired with fear at his sight, and when a person is not himself inspired with fear at the sight of others, when a person ceases to cherish desire and hate, he is then said to attain to Brahma.³⁴ When a person ceases to entertain a sinful attitude towards all creatures in thought, word, and deed, he is then said to attain to Brahma.†³⁵ By restraining the mind and the soul, by casting off malice that stupifies the mind, and by throwing off desire and stupefaction, one is said to attain to Brahma.³⁶ When a person assumes an equality of attitude in respect of all objects of hearing and vision (and the operations of the other senses) as also in respect of all living creatures, and transcends all pairs of opposites, he is then said to attain to Brahma.³⁷

* I. e., when Emancipation and omniscience have been attained in the very first mode of life, no further need exists for conforming to the three other modes of life.—T.

† I. e., behold the Supreme Soul by his own Soul.—T.

‡ Instead of 'pāpakam' some texts read 'pāvakam,' meaning 'of the nature of fire.'—T.

When a person casts an equal eye upon praise and dispraise, gold and iron, happiness and misery,³⁹ heat and cold, good and evil, the agreeable and the disagreeable, life and death, he is then said to attain to Brahma.⁴⁰ One observing the duties of the mendicant orders should restrain one's senses and the mind even like a tortoise withdrawing its out-stretched limbs.⁴¹ As a house enveloped in darkness is capable of being seen with the aid of a lighted lamp, after the same manner can the soul be seen with the aid of the lamp of the understanding.⁴² O foremost of intelligent persons, I see that all this knowledge that I am communicating to thee dwells in thee. Whatever else should be known by one desirous of learning the religion of Emancipation is already known to thee.⁴³ O regenerate Rishi, I am convinced that through the grace of thy preceptor and through the instructions thou hast received thou hast already transcended all objects of the senses.⁴⁴ O great ascetic, through the grace of that sire of thine, I have attained to omniscience, and hence I have succeeded in knowing thee.⁴⁵ Thy knowledge is much greater than what thou thinkest thou hast. Thy perceptions also that result from intuition are much greater than what thou thinkest thou hast. Thy puissance also is much greater than thou art conscious of.⁴⁶ Whether in consequence of thy tender age, or of the doubts thou hast not been able to dispel, or of the fear that is due to the unattainment of Emancipation, thou art not conscious of that knowledge due to intuition although it has arisen in thy mind.⁴⁷ After one's doubts have been dispelled by persons like us, one succeeds in opening the knots of one's heart and then, by a righteous exertion one attains to and becomes conscious of that knowledge.⁴⁸ As regards thyself, thou art one that hast already acquired knowledge. Thy intelligence is steady and tranquil. Thou art free from covetousness. For all that,

* After 'manasā,' 'saha' is understood. It does not mean that the senses are to be restrained by the mind, but the words imply that the mind and the senses are to be restrained. K. P. Singha renders the line correctly. The Burdwan translator, as usual, is careless.—T.

† K. P. Singha skips over this Verse.—T.

O Brāhmana, one never succeeds in attaining to Brahma, which is the highest object of acquisition, without exertion.⁴⁸ Thou seest no distinction between happiness and misery. Thou art not covetous. Thou hast no longing for dancing and song. Thou hast no attachments.⁴⁹ Thou hast no attachment to friends. Thou hast no fear in things that inspire fear. O blessed one, I see that thou castest an equal eye upon a lump of gold and a clod of earth.⁵⁰ Myself and other persons possessed of wisdom, behold thee established in the highest and indestructible path of tranquillity.⁵¹ Thou stayest, O Brāhmana, in those duties which obtain for the Brāhmana that fruit which should be his and which is identical with the essence of the object represented by Emancipation. What else hast thou to ask me?—’ ”⁵²

SECTION CCCXXVIII.

“Bhishma said,—‘Having heard these words of king Janaka, Cuka of cleansed soul and settled conclusions began to stay in his Soul by his Soul, having of course seen Self by Self.*¹ His object being accomplished, he became happy and tranquil, and without putting further questions to Janaka, he proceeded northwards to the mountains of Himavat with the speed of the wind and like the wind.†² Those mountains abounded with diverse tribes of Apsaras and echoed with many soft sounds. Teeming with thousands of Kinnaras and Bhiringarājas,‡³ it was adorned, besides, with many Madgus and Khanjaritas and many Jivajivakas of variegated hue.⁴ And there were many peacocks also of gorgeous colors, uttering their shrill but melodious cries.⁵ Many bevvies of swans also, and many flights of gladdened Kokilas too, adorned the place. The prince of birds, viz., Garuda, dwelt on that summit constantly.⁶ The four Regents

* I. e., he turned his soul's gaze on his soul and withdrew himself from every worldly object.—T.

† He no longer walked like ordinary men. Without trailing along the solid support of the Earth, he proceeded through the sky.—T.

‡ Popularly, Bhimarāja, the *Lanius Malabaricus*.—T.

of the world, the deities, and diverse classes of *Rishis*, used always to come there from desire of doing good to the world.⁷ It was there that the high-souled Vishnu had undergone the severest austerities for the object of obtaining a son.⁸ It was there that the celestial generalissimo named Kumāra, in his younger days, disregarding the three worlds with all the celestial denizens, threw down his dart, piercing the Earth therewith. Throwing down his dart, Skanda, addressing the universe, said,⁹—If there be any person that is supericr to me in might, or that holds Brāhmanas to be dearer, or that can compare with me in devotion to the Brāhmanas and the Vedas, or that is possessed of energy like unto me,¹⁰ let him draw up this dart or at last shake it!—Hearing this challenge, the three worlds became filled with anxiety, and all creatures asked one another, saying,—Who will raise this dart?¹¹—Vishnu beheld all the deities and Asuras and Rākshasas to be troubled in their senses and mind.¹² He reflected upon what should be the best to be done under the circumstances. Without being able to bear that challenge in respect of the hurling of the dart, he cast his eyes on Skanda the son of the Fire-god.¹³ The pure-souled Vishnu caught hold of the blazing dart with his left hand, and began to shake it.¹⁴ When the dart was being thus shaken by Vishnu possessed of great might, the whole Earth with her mountains, forests, and seas, shook with the dart.¹⁵ Although Vishnu was fully competent to raise the dart, still he contented himself with only shaking it. In this, the puissant lord only kept the honor of Skanda intact.¹⁶ Having shaken it himself, the divine Vishnu, addressing Prahlāda, said,—Behold the might of Kumāra! None else in the universe can raise this dart!¹⁷ Unable to bear this, Prahlāda resolved to raise the dart. He seized it, but was unable to shake it at all.¹⁸ Uttering a loud cry, he fell down on the hill-top in a swoon. Indeed, the son of Hiranya-kaçipu fell down on the Earth.¹⁹ Repairing towards the northern side of those grand mountains, Mahādeva, having the bull for his sign, had undergone the austerest penances.²⁰ The asylum where Mahādeva had

undergone those austerities is encompassed on all sides with a blazing fire. Unapproachable by persons of uncleansed souls, that mountain is known by the name of Āditya.²¹ There is a fiery girdle all around it, of the width of ten Yojanas, and it is incapable of being approached by Yakshas and Rākshasas and Dānavas.²² The illustrious god of Fire, possessed of mighty energy, dwells there in person, employed in removing all impediments from the side of Mahādeva of great wisdom who remained there for a thousand celestial years, all the while standing on one foot.²³ Dwelling on the side of that foremost of mountains, Mahādeva of high vows (by his penances) scorched the deities greatly.²⁴ At the foot of those mountains, in a retired spot, Parāçara's son of great ascetic merit, viz., Vyāsa, taught the Vedas unto his disciples.²⁵ Those disciples were the highly blessed Sumanta, Vaiçampāyana, Jaimini of great wisdom, and Paila of great ascetic merit.²⁶ Cuka proceeded to that delightful asylum where his sire, the great ascetic Vyāsa, was dwelling, surrounded by his disciples.²⁷ Seated in his asylum, Vyāsa beheld his son approach like a blazing fire of scattered flames, or resembling the Sun himself in effulgence.²⁸ As Cuka approached, he did not seem to touch the trees or the rocks of the mountain. Completely dissociated from all objects of the senses, and engaged in Yoga, the high-souled ascetic came, resembling, in speed, a shaft let from a bow.²⁹ Born on the fire-sticks, Cuka, approaching his sire, touched his feet. With becoming formalities he then accosted the disciples of his sire.³⁰ With great cheerfulness he then detailed to his father all the particulars of his conversation with king Janaka.³¹ Vyāsa the son of Parāçara, after the arrival of his puissant son, continued to dwell there on the Himavat, engaged in teaching his disciples and his son.³² One day as he was seated, his disciples, all well-skilled in the Vedas, having their senses

* It is believed that a person, by performing austere penances, scorches the three worlds. It is in consequence of this effect of penances that the superior deities were always compelled by the Asuras and Dānavas to grant them whatever boons they solicited.—T.

under control, and endued with tranquil souls, sat themselves around him.³³ All of them had thoroughly mastered the Vedas with their branches. All of them were observant of penances. With joined hands they addressed their preceptor in the following words.³⁴ •

“The disciples said,—We have, through thy grace, been endued with great energy. Our fame also has spread. There is one favor that we humbly solicit thee to grant us.³⁵—Hearing these words of theirs, the regenerate Rishi answered them, saying,—Ye sons, tell me what that boon is which ye wish I should grant you!³⁶—Hearing this answer of their preceptor, the disciples became filled with joy. Once more bowing their heads low unto their preceptor and joining their hands,³⁷ all of them in one voice said, O king, these excellent words:—If our preceptor has been pleased with us, then, O best of sages, we are sure to be crowned with success!³⁸ We all solicit thee, O great Rishi, to grant us a boon. Be thou inclined to be graceful to us. Let no sixth disciple (besides us five) succeed in attaining to fame!³⁹ We are four. Our preceptor's son forms the fifth. Let the Vedas shine in only us five! Even this is the boon that we solicit!⁴⁰—Hearing these words of his disciples, Vyāsa, the son of Parāçara, possessed of great intelligence, well conversant with the meanings of the Vedas, endued with a righteous soul, and always engaged in thinking of objects that confer benefits on a person in the world hereafter, said unto his disciples these righteous words fraught with great benefit:—The Vedas should always be given unto him who is a Brāhmana, or unto him who is desirous of listening to Vedic instructions, by him who eagerly wishes to attain to a residence in the region of Brahman!⁴¹⁻⁴² Do ye multiply. Let the Vedas spread (through your exertions). The Vedas should never be imparted unto one that has not formally become a disciple. Nor should they be given unto one who is not observant of good vows. Nor should they be given for dwelling in one that is of uncleansed soul.⁴³ These should be known as the proper qualifications of persons that can be accepted as disciples (for the communication of Vedic

knowledge). No science should be imparted unto one without a proper examination of one's character.⁴⁴ As pure gold is tested by heat, cutting, and rubbing, after the same manner disciples should be tested by their birth and accomplishments.⁴⁵ Ye should never set your disciples to tasks to which they should not be set, or to tasks that are fraught with danger. One's knowledge is always commensurate with one's understanding and diligence in study.⁴⁶ Let all disciples conquer all difficulties, and let all of them meet with auspicious success. Ye are competent to lecture on the scriptures unto persons of all the orders. Only ye should, while lecturing, address a Brāhmana, placing him in the van.⁴⁷ These are the rules in respect of the study of the Vedas. This again is regarded as a high task. The Vedas were created by the Self-born for the purpose of praising the deities therewith.⁴⁸ That man who, through stupefaction of intellect, speaks ill of a Brāhmana well-conversant with the Vedas, is certain to meet with humiliation in consequence of such evil-speaking.⁴⁹ He who, disregarding all righteous rules, solicits knowledge, and he who, disregarding the rules of righteousness, communicates knowledge, either of them falls off and instead of that affection which should prevail between preceptor and disciple, such questioning and such communication are sure to produce distrust and suspicion.⁵⁰ I have now told ye everything about the way in which the Vedas should be studied and taught. Ye should act in this way towards your disciples, bearing these instructions in your minds !—' "⁵¹

SECTION CCCXXIX.

“Bhishma said,—‘Hearing these words of their preceptor, Vyāsa's disciples endued with great energy, became filled with joy and embraced one another.¹ Addressing one another, they said,—That which has been said by our illustrious preceptor in view of our future good, will live in our remembrance and we shall certainly act according to it.²—Having said this unto one another with joyful hearts,

disciples of Vyāsa, who were thorough masters of words, once more addressed their preceptor and said,⁵—If it pleases thee, O puissant one, we wish to descend from this mountain to the Earth, O great ascetic, for the purpose of subdividing the Vedas!⁶—Hearing these words of his disciples, the puissant son of Parāçara replied unto them in these beneficial words that were fraught, besides, with righteousness and profit,⁷—You may repair to the Earth or to the regions of the celestials as ye like. You should always be heedful, for the Vedas are such that they are always liable to be misunderstood!⁸—Permitted by their preceptor of truthful speech, the disciples left him after circumambulating him and bowing their heads unto him.⁷ Descending upon the Earth they performed the Agnishtoma and other sacrifices; and they began to officiate at the sacrifices of Brāhmanas and Kshatriyas and Vaiçyas.⁸ Happily passing their days in the domestic mode of life, they were treated by the Brāhmanas with great respect. Possessed of great fame and prosperity, they were employed in teaching and officiating in sacrifices.⁹ After his disciples had gone away, Vyāsa remained in his asylum, with only his son in his company. Passing his days in anxious thoughtfulness, the great Rishi, possessed of wisdom, kept silent, sitting in a retired corner of the asylum.¹⁰ At that time Nārada of great ascetic merit came to that spot for seeing Vyāsa, and addressing him, said these words of melodious sound.¹¹

“Nārada said,—O regenerate Rishi of Vaçishtha's race, why are Vedic sounds silent now? Why art thou sitting silent and alone, engaged in meditation like one taken up with an engrossing thought?¹² Alas, shorn of Vedic echoes, this mountain hath lost its beauty, even as the Moon shorn of splendour when assailed by Rāhu or enveloped in dust.^{†13}

* The sense is that if the Vedas are not constantly studied, they are likely to be forgotten.—T.

† ‘Upaplava’ is Rāhu or the ascending node. In many parts of upper India, during the hot months in particular, large quantities of dust are raised by whirlwinds in the afternoon or at evening. Called *Andi*, the clouds of dust cover the moon for hours together.—T.

Though inhabited by the celestial Rishis, yet shorn of Vedic sounds, the mountain no longer looks beautiful now but resembles a hamlet of Nishādas.*¹⁴ The Rishis, the deities, and the Gandharvas, too, no longer shine as before in consequence of being deprived of Vedic sound!¹⁵—Hearing these words of Nārada, the Island-born Krishna answered, saying,—O great Rishi, O thou that art conversant with the declarations of the Vedas, all that thou hast said is agreeable to me and it truly behooves thee to say it unto me! Thou art omniscient. Thou hast seen everything. Thy curiosity also embraces all things within its sphere.¹⁶⁻¹⁷ All that has ever occurred in the three worlds is well known to thee. Do thou then, O regenerate Rishi, set thy commands on me. O, tell me what I am to do!¹⁸ Tell me, O regenerate Rishi, what should now be done by me. Separated from my disciples, my mind has become very cheerless now.¹⁹

“Nārada said,—The stain of the Vedas is the suspension of their recitation. The stain of the Brāhmanas is their non-observance of vows. The Vāhika race is the stain of the Earth. Curiosity is the stain of women.²⁰ Do thou with thy intelligent son recite the Vedas, and do thou with the echoes of Vedic sounds dispel the fears arising from Rākshasas!²¹

“Bhishma continued,—‘Hearing these words of Nārada, Vyāsa, the foremost of all persons conversant with duties and firmly devoted to Vedic recitation, became filled with joy and answered Nārada, saying,—So be it.²²—With his son Cuka, he set himself to recite the Vedas in a loud sonorous voice, observing all the rules of orthoepy and, as it were, filling the three worlds with that sound.²³ One day as sire and son, who were well conversant with all duties, were engaged in reciting the Vedas, a violent wind arose that seemed to be impelled by the gales that blow on the bosom of the ocean.²⁴ Understanding from this circumstance that the hour was not suited to sacred recitation, Vyāsa

* The lowest order of men, living by slaying animals.—T.

immediately bade his son to suspend the recitation. Cuka, thus forbidden by his sire, became filled with curiosity.²⁶ He asked his sire, saying,—O regenerate one, whence is this wind? It behooveth thee to tell me everything about the conduct of the Wind.²⁶—Hearing this question of Cuka, Vyāsa became filled with amazement. He answered Cuka by telling him that that was an omen which indicated that the recitation of the Vedas should be suspended.²⁷—Thou hast obtained spiritual vision. Thy mind too has, of itself, become cleansed of every impurity. Thou hast been freed from the attributes of Passion and Darkness. Thou stayest now in the attribute of Goodness.²⁸ Thou beholdest now thy Soul with thy Soul even as one beholds one's own shadow in a mirror. Staying thyself on thy own Soul, do thou reflect on the Vedas.²⁹ The path of the Supreme Soul is called Deva-yāna (the path of the gods). The path that is made up of the attribute of Tamas is called Pitri-yāna (the path of Pitris). These are the two paths in the world hereafter. By one, people go to heaven. By the other people go to hell.³⁰ The winds blow, on the Earth's surface and in the welkin. There are seven courses in which they blow. Listen to me as I recount them one after another.³¹ The body is furnished with the senses. The senses are dominated over by the Sādhya and many great beings of mighty strength. These gave birth to an invincible son named Samāna.³² From Samāna sprang a son called Udāna. From Udāna sprang Vyāna. From Vyāna arose Apāna, and lastly from Apāna sprang the wind called Prāna.³³ That invincible scorcher of all foes, viz., Prāna, became childless. I shall now recite to thee the different functions of those winds.³⁴ The wind is the cause of the different functions of all living creatures, and because living creatures are enabled to live by it, therefore is the wind called Prāna (or life).³⁵ That wind which is the first in the above enumeration and which is known by the name of Pravaha (Samāna) urges, along the first course, masses of clouds born of smoke and heat. Coursing through the welkin, and coming into contact with the water contained in the clouds, that wind displays itself in effulgence

among the darts of lightening.*³⁶ The second wind, called *Āvaha* blows with a loud noise. It is this wind that causes *Soma* and the other luminaries to rise and appear. Within the body (which is a microcosm of the universe) that wind is called *Udāna* by the wise.³⁷ That wind which sucks up water from the four oceans, and having sucked it up imparts it to the clouds in the welkin, and which, having imparted it to the clouds presents them to the deity of rain, is third in the enumeration and known by the name of *Udvaha*.³⁸⁻³⁹ That wind which supports the clouds and divides them into diverse portions, which melts them for pouring rain and once more solidifies them, which is perceived as the sound of the roaring clouds, which exists for the preservation of the world by itself assuming the form of the clouds, which bears the cars of all celestial beings along the sky, is known by the name of *Samvaha*. The fourth in the enumeration, it is endued with great strength so that it is capable of rending the very mountains.⁴⁰⁻⁴¹ The fifth wind is fraught with great force and speed. It is dry and up-roots and breaks down all trees. Existing with it, the clouds come to be called by the name of *Valāhaka*.⁴² That wind causes calamitous phenomena of many kinds, and produces roaring sounds in the firmament. It is known by the name of *Vivaha*.⁴³⁻⁴⁴ The sixth wind bears all celestial waters in the firmament and prevents them from falling down. Sustaining the sacred waters of the celestial *Gangā*, that wind blows, preventing them from having a downward course.⁴⁵ Obstructed by that wind from a distance, the Sun, which is really the source of a thousand rays, and which enlightens the world, appears as a luminous body of but one ray.⁴⁶ Through the action of that wind, the Moon, after waning, wanes again till he displays his full disc. That wind is known, O foremost of ascetics, by the name of

* This Verse, in the Bengali texts, is a triplet. In the Bombay edition, the third line is excluded from Verse 36. There is no inconvenience in this ; only, it should be construed as referring to the wind called *Samāna* or *Pravaha*.—T.

Parivaha.*⁴⁷ That wind which takes away the life of all living creatures when the proper hour comes, whose track is followed by Death and Surya's son Yama,⁴⁸ which becomes the source of that immortality which is attained by Yogins of subtile sight who are always engaged in Yoga-meditation,⁴⁹ by whose aid the thousands of grandsons of Daksha, that lord of creatures, by his ten sons, succeeded in days of old in attaining to the ends of the universe, whose touch enables one to attain to Emancipation by freeing oneself from the obligation of returning to the world,—that wind is called by the name of Parāvaha. The foremost of all winds, it is incapable of being resisted by anybody.⁵⁰⁻⁵¹ Wonderful are these winds all of whom are the sons of Diti. Capable of going everywhere and upholding all things, they blow all around thee without being attached to thee at any time.⁵² This, however, is exceedingly wonderful, viz., that this foremost of mountains should thus be suddenly shaken by that wind which has begun to blow.⁵³ This wind is the breath of Vishnu's nostrils. When urged forth with speed, it begins to blow with great force at which the whole universe becomes agitated.⁵⁴ Hence, when the wind begins to blow with violence, persons, conversant with the Vedas do not recite the Vedas. The Vedas are a form of wind. If uttered with force, the external wind becomes tortured.'—⁵⁵

“Having said these words, the puissant son of Parāçara bade his son (when the wind had ceased) to go on with his Vedic recitation. He then left that spot for plunging into the waters of the celestial Gangā.”†⁵⁶

* Some texts read ‘Jayatāmvarah.’ If this be accepted, it would be an adjective of Parivaha, meaning the foremost of all in strength or energy.—T.

† The sacred river Gangā has, it is said, three courses or streams. One flows on the surface of the Earth; the second flows through the nether regions; and the third flows through heaven.—T.

SECTION CCCXXX.

“Bhishma said,—After Vyāsa had left the spot, Nārada, traversing through the sky, came to Cuka employed in studying the scriptures. The celestial Rishi came for the object of asking Cuka the meaning of certain portions of the Vedas.¹ Beholding the celestial Rishi Nārada arrived at his retreat, Cuka worshipped him by offering him the Arghya according to the rites laid down in the Vedas.² Pleased with the honors bestowed upon him, Nārada addressed Cuka, saying,—Tell me, O foremost of righteous persons, by what means, O dear child, may I accomplish what is for thy highest good !³—Hearing these words of Nārada, Cuka said unto him, O Bhārata, these words :—It behooveth thee to instruct me in respect of that which may be beneficial to me !—⁴

“Nārada said,—In days of yore the illutrious Sanat-kumāra had said these words unto certain Rishis of cleansed souls that had repaired to him for enquiring after the truth.⁵ There is no eye like that of knowledge. There is no penance like the practice of truth. There is no sorrow like attachment. There is no happiness like renunciation.⁶ Abstinence from sinful acts, steady practice of righteousness, good conduct, the due observance of all religious duties,—these constitute the highest good.⁷ Having obtained the status of humanity which is fraught with sorrow, he that becomes attached to it, becomes stupified : such a man never succeeds in emancipating himself from sorrow. Attachment (to things of the world) is an indication of sorrow.⁸ The understanding of a person that is attached to worldly things becomes more and more enmeshed in the net of stupifaction. The man who becomes enmeshed in the net of stupifaction attains to sorrow both here and hereafter.⁹ One should, by every means in one’s power, restrain both desire and wrath if one seeks to achieve what is for one’s good. Those two, (*viz.*, desire and wrath) arise for only destroying one’s good.^{*10} One should always protect one’s penances from wrath, and

* The first line runs into the second.—T.

one's prosperity from pride. One should always protect one's knowledge from honor and dishonor, and one's soul from error.*¹¹ Compassion is the highest virtue. Forgiveness is the highest might. The knowledge of self is the highest knowledge. There is nothing higher than truth.¹² It is always proper to speak the truth. It is better again to speak what is beneficial than to speak what is true. I hold that that is truth which is fraught with the greatest benefit to all creatures.†¹³ That man is said to be truly learned and truly possessed of wisdom who abandons every act, who never indulges in hope, who is completely dissociated from all worldly surroundings, and who has renounced everything that appertains to the world.¹⁴ That person who, without being attached thereto, enjoys all objects of sense with the aid of senses that are completely under his control, who is possessed of a tranquil soul, who is never moved by joy or sorrow, who is engaged in Yoga-meditation,¹⁵ who lives in companionship with the deities presiding over his senses and

* Penances should be protected from wrath. By penances one attains to great power. The ascetic's puissance frequently equals that of Brahman himself. If, however, the ascetic indulges in wrath and curses one from wrath, his puissance becomes diminished. For this reason, forgiveness is said to be the highest virtue a Brāhmana can practise. A Brāhmana's might lay in forgiveness. Knowledge also should be protected from honor and dishonor, i. e., one should never receive honor for his knowledge, that is, do anything for the object of achieving honor. Similarly, one should never do anything which may have the effect of dishonoring one's knowledge. These are some of the highest duties preached in the scriptures.—T.

† The saying 'Satyādapi hitam vadet' is frequently misunderstood. The scriptures do not say that truth should be sacrificed in view of what is beneficial, for such a view will militate with the saying that there is nothing higher than truth. The saying has reference to those exceptional instances where truth becomes a source of positive harm. The story of the Rishi who spoke the truth respecting the place where certain travellers lay concealed, when questioned by certain robbers who were for killing the travellers, is an instance to the point. The goldsmith's son who died with a falsehood on his lips for allowing his lawful prince to escape from the hands of his pursuers did a meritorious act of loyalty. Then, again, the germ of the utilitarian theory may be detected in the second line of this Verse.—T.

dissociated also from them, and who, though endued with a body, never regards himself as identifiable with it, becomes emancipated and very soon attains to that which is his highest good.¹⁶ One who never sees others, never touches others, never talks with others, soñ, O ascetic, attains to what is for one's highest good.¹⁷ One should not injure any creature. On the other hand, one should conduct oneself in perfect friendliness towards all. Having obtained the status of humanity, one should never behave inimically towards any being.¹⁸ A complete disregard for all (worldly) things, perfect contentment, abandonment of hope of every kind, and patience,—these constitute the highest good of one that has subjugated one's senses and acquired a knowledge of self.¹⁹ Casting off all attachments, O child, do thou subjugate all thy senses, and by that means attain to felicity both here and hereafter.²⁰ They that are free from cupidity have never to suffer any sorrow. One should, therefore, cast off all cupidity from one's soul. By casting off cupidity, O amiable and blessed one, thou shalt be able to free thyself from sorrow and pain.²¹ One who wishes to conquer that which is unconquerable should live devoting oneself to penances, to self-restraint, to taciturnity, to a subjugation of the soul. Such a person should live in the midst of attachments without being attached to them.*²² That Brāhmana who lives in the midst of attachments without being attached to them and who always lives in seclusion, very soon attains to the highest felicity.²³ That man who lives in happiness by himself in the midst of creatures who are seen to take delight in leading lives of sexual union, should be known to be a person whose thirst has been slaked by knowledge. It is well known that that man whose thirst has been slaked by knowledge has never to indulge in grief.²⁴ One attains to the status of the deities by means of good acts; to the status of humanity by means of acts that are good and bad; while by acts that are purely wicked, one helplessly falls down among the lower animals.²⁵ Always assailed by sorrow and

* 'To conquer the unconquerable' means to attain to Brahma.—T.

decrepitude and death, a living creature is being cooked in this world (in the cauldron of Time). Dost thou not know it?²⁶ Thou frequently regardest that to be beneficial which is really injurious; that to be certain which is really uncertain; and that to be desirable and good which is undesirable and not good. Alas, why dost thou not awake to a correct apprehension of these?²⁷ Like a silkworm that ensconces itself in its own cocoon, thou art continually ensconcing thyself in a cocoon made of thy own innumerable acts born of stupifaction and error. Alas, why dost thou not awake to a correct apprehension of thy situation?²⁸ No need of attaching thyself to things of this world. Attachment to worldly objects is productive of evil. The silk-worm that weaves a cocoon round itself is at last destroyed by its own act.²⁹ Those persons that become attached to sons and spouses and relatives meet with destruction at last, even as wild elephants sunk in the mire of a lake are gradually weakened till overtaken by Death.³⁰ Behold, all creatures that suffer themselves to be dragged by the net of affection become subject to great grief even as fishes on land, dragged thereto by means of large nets!³¹ Relatives, sons, spouses, the body itself, and all one's possessions stored with care, are unsubstantial and prove of no service in the next world. Only acts, good and bad, that one does, follow one to the other world.³² When it is certain that thou shalt have to go helplessly to the other world, leaving behind thee all these things, alas, why dost thou then suffer thyself to be attached to such unsubstantial things of no value, without attending to that which constitutes thy real and durable wealth?³³ The path which thou shalt have to travel through is without resting places of any kind (in which to take rest). There is no support along that way which one may catch for upholding oneself. The country through which it passes is unknown and undiscovered. It is, again, enveloped in thick darkness. Alas, how shalt thou proceed along that way without equipping thyself with the necessary expenses?³⁴ When thou shalt go along that road, nobody will follow thee behind. Only thy acts, good and bad, will follow behind thee

when thou shalt depart from this world for the next.³⁵ One seeks one's object of objects by means of learning, acts, purity (both external and internal), and great knowledge. When that foremost of objects is attained, one becomes freed (from rebirth).³⁶ The desire that one feels for living in the midst of human habitations is like a binding cord. They that are of good acts succeed in tearing that bond and freeing themselves. Only men of wicked deeds do not succeed in breaking them.³⁷ The river of life (or the world) is terrible. Personal beauty or form constitutes its banks. The mind is the speed of its current. Touch forms its island. Taste constitutes its current. Scent is its mire. Sound is its waters. That particular part of it which leads towards heaven is attended with great difficulties. Body is the boat by which one must cross that river. Forgiveness is the oar by which it is to be propelled. Truth is the ballast that is to steady that boat. The practice of righteousness is the string that is to be attached to the mast for dragging that boat along difficult waters. Charity or gift constitutes the wind that urges the sails of that boat. Endued with swift speed, it is with that boat that one must cross the river of life.³⁸⁻³⁹ Cast off both virtue and vice, and truth and falsehood. Having cast off truth and falsehood, do thou cast off that by which these are to be cast off.⁴⁰ By casting off all purpose, do thou cast off virtue; do thou cast off sin also by casting off all desire. With the aid of the understanding, do thou cast off truth and falsehood; and, at last, do thou cast off the understanding itself by knowledge of the highest topic (*viz.*, the Supreme Soul).⁴¹ Do thou cast off this body having bones for its pillars; sinews for its binding strings and cords; flesh and blood for its outer plaster; the skin for its outer case; full of urine and fæces and, therefore, emitting a foul smell; exposed to the assaults of decrepitude and sorrow; forming the seat of disease and weakened by pain; possessed of the attribute of *Rajas* in predominance; not permanent or durable, and which serves as the (temporary) habitation of the indwelling creature.⁴²⁻⁴³ This entire universe of matter, and that which is

called Mahat or Buddhi, are made up of the (five) great elements. That which is called Mahat is due to the action of the Supreme.⁴⁴ The five senses, the three attributes of Tamas, Sattwa, and Rajas,—these (together with those which have been mentioned before) constitute a tale of seventeen.⁴⁵ These seventeen, which are known by the name of the Unmanifest, with all those that are called Manifest, viz., the five objects of the five senses, (that is to say, form, taste, sound, touch, and scent), with Consciousness and the Understanding, form the well-known tale of four and twenty.⁴⁶ When endued with those four and twenty possessions, one comes to be called by the name of Jiva (or Pumān).⁴⁷ He who knows the aggregate of three (viz., Religion, Wealth, and Pleasure), as also happiness and sorrow and life and death, truly and in all their details, is said to know growth and decay. Whatever objects exist of knowledge, should be known gradually, one after another.⁴⁸ All objects that are apprehended by the senses are called Manifest. Whatever objects transcend the senses and are apprehended by means only of their indications are said to be Unmanifest.⁴⁹ By restraining the senses, one wins great gratification, even like a thirsty and parched traveller at a delicious shower of rain. Having subjugated the senses one beholds one's soul spread out for embracing all objects, and all objects in one's soul.⁵⁰ Having its root in knowledge, the puissance is never lost of the man who (thus) beholds the Supreme in his soul,—of the man, that is to say, who always beholds all creatures in all conditions (in his own soul).⁵¹ He who, by the aid of knowledge, transcends all kinds of pain born of error and stupefaction, never catches any evil by coming into contact with all creatures.[†] Such a man, his understanding being

* In the Crutis, 'Parāvara' is an equivalent for the Supreme Soul. The correct reading is 'naçyati' at the end of the first line, and not 'paçyati' as in some of the Bengal texts. Adhering to 'paçyati' (which ives no meaning), the Burdwan translator gives a ridiculous and unmeaning version of this Verse. K. P. Singha, of course, adopts the correct reading.—T.

† This Verse is not at all difficult. The sense is that the man who

fully displayed, never finds fault with the course of conduct that prevails in the world. One conversant with Emancipation says that the Supreme Soul is without beginning and without end; that it takes birth as all creatures; that it resides (as a witness) in the Jiva-soul; that it is inactive, and without form. Only that man who meets with grief in consequence of his own misdeeds,⁵³⁻⁵⁴ slays numerous creatures for the purpose of warding off that grief.* In consequence of such sacrifices, the performers have to attain to rebirths and have necessarily to perform innumerable acts on every side.⁵⁵ Such a man, blinded by error, and regarding that to be felicity which is really a source of grief, is continually rendered unhappy even like a sick person that eats food that is improper.⁵⁶ Such a man is pressed and grinded by his acts like any substance that is churned. Bound by his acts, he obtains rebirth, the order of his life being determined by the nature of his acts.⁵⁷ Suffering many kinds of torture, he travels in a repeated round of rebirths even like a wheel that turns ceaselessly. Thou, however, hast cut through all thy bonds. Thou abstainest from all acts!⁵⁸ Possessed of omniscience and the master of all things, let success be thine, and do thou become freed from all existent objects. Through subjugation of their senses and the power of their penances, many persons (in days of yore), having destroyed the bonds of action, attained to high success and uninterrupted felicity.—’ ”⁵⁹

transcends all attachments never comes to grief if brought into union with other creatures. The Burdwan translator gives a thoroughly unmeaning version of this couplet.—T.

* The object of this Verse is to show that men of knowledge do not perform sacrifices, in which, as a matter of course, a large number of creatures is slain. Men wedded to the religion of Pravritti perform sacrifices. Coming into the world in consequence of past acts, they seek happiness (by repairing to heaven) along the way of sacrifice and religious rites. A large number of creatures is slain, for besides the victims ostensibly offered, a infinite number of smaller and minuter creatures is killed in the sacrificial fires and in course of the other preparations that are made in sacrifices.—T.

SECTION CCCXXXI.

“Nārada said,—By listening to such scriptures as are blessed, as bring about tranquillity, as dispel grief, and as are productive of happiness, one attains to (a pure) understanding, and having attained to it obtains to high felicity.¹ A thousand causes of sorrow, a hundred causes of fear, from day to day, afflict one that is destitute of understanding but not one that is possessed of wisdom and learning.² Do thou, therefore, listen to some old narratives as I recite them to you, for the object of dispelling thy griefs. If one can subjugate one's understanding, one is sure to attain to happiness.³ By accession of what is undesirable and dissociation from what is agreeable, only men of little intelligence become subject to mental sorrow of every kind.⁴ When things have become past, one should not grieve, thinking of their merits. He that thinks of such past things with affection can never emancipate himself.⁵ One should always seek to find out the faults of those things to which one begins to become attached. One should always regard such things to be fraught with much evil. By doing so, one should soon free oneself therefrom.⁶ The man who grieves for what is past fails to acquire either wealth or religious merit or fame. That which exists no longer cannot be obtained. When such things pass away, they do not return (however keen the regret one may indulge in for their sake).⁷ Creatures sometimes acquire and sometimes lose worldly objects. No man in this world can be grieved by all the events that fall upon him.⁸ Dead or lost, he who grieves for what is past, only gets sorrow for sorrow. Instead of one sorrow, he gets two.⁹ Those men who, beholding the course of life and death in the world with the aid of their intelligence, do not shed tears, are said to behold properly. Such persons have never to shed tears (at anything that may happen).¹⁰ When any such calamity comes, productive of either physical or mental

* Sorrow increases by indulgence.—T

grief, as is incapable of being warded off by even one's efforts, one should cease to reflect on it with sorrow.¹¹ This is the medicine for sorrow, *viz.*, not to think of it. By thinking of it, one can never dispel it; on the other hand, by thinking upon sorrow, one only enhances it.¹² Mental griefs should be killed by wisdom; while physical grief should be dispelled by medicines. This is the power of knowledge. One should not, in such matters, behave like men of little understandings.¹³ Youth, beauty, life, stored wealth, health, association with those that are loved,—these all are exceedingly transitory. One possessed of wisdom should never covet them.¹⁴ One should not lament individually for a sorrowful occurrence that concerns an entire community. Instead of indulgence in it when grief comes, one should seek to avert it and apply a remedy as soon as one sees the opportunity for doing it.¹⁵ There is no doubt that in this life the measure of misery is much greater than that of happiness. There is no doubt in this that all men show attachment for objects of the senses and that death is regarded as disagreeable.¹⁶ That man who casts off both joy and sorrow, is said to attain to Brahma. When such a man departs from this world, men of wisdom never indulge in any sorrow on his account.¹⁷ In spending wealth there is pain. In protecting it there is pain. In acquiring it there is pain. Hence, when one's wealth meets with destruction, one should not indulge in any sorrow for it.¹⁸ Men of little understandings, attaining to different grades of wealth, fail to win contentment and at last perish in misery. Men of wisdom, however, are always contented.¹⁹ All combinations are destined to end in dissolution. All things that are high are destined to fall down and become low. Union is sure to end in disunion, and life is certain to end in death.²⁰ Thirst is unquenchable. Contentment is the highest happiness. Hence, persons of wisdom regard contentment to be the most precious wealth.²¹ One's allotted period of life is running continually. It stops not in its course for even a single moment. When one's body itself is not durable, what other thing is there (in this world) that one should reckon as durable?²² Those persons

who, reflecting on the nature of all creatures and concluding that it is beyond the grasp of the mind, turn their attention to the highest path, and, setting out, achieve a fair progress in it, have not to indulge in sorrow.*²³ Like a tiger seizing and running away with its prey, Death seizes and runs away with the man that is employed in such (unprofitable) occupation and that is still unsated with objects of desire and enjoyment.²⁴ One should always seek to emancipate oneself from sorrow. One should seek to dispel sorrow by beginning one's operations with cheerfulness, that is, without indulging in sorrow the while, having freed oneself from a particular sorrow, one should act in such a way as to keep sorrow at a distance by abstaining from all faults of conduct.†²⁵ The rich and the poor alike find nothing in sound and touch and form and scent and taste, after the immediate enjoyment thereof.‡²⁶ Before union, creatures are never subject to sorrow. Hence, one that has not fallen off from one's original nature, never indulges in sorrow when that union comes to an end.§²⁷ One should restrain one's sexual appetite and the

* This is a very doubtful Verse. The Commentator is silent. I follow the meaning as it lies on the surface. The object of the Verse seems to be this: there are men that are employed in reflecting upon the nature of things; these should know that such occupation is useless, for truly the nature of things is beyond the grasp of the mind. The greatest philosopher is ignorant of all the virtues of a blade of grass, the purpose for which it exists, the changes that it undergoes every instant of time and from day to day. Those men, however, who leave such unprofitable occupation for walking along the highest path (the path, that is, which leads to Brahma) free themselves from grief.—T.

† I am not sure that I have understood this Verse correctly.—T.

‡ What is intended to be said is that the gratification of the senses leaves nothing behind. The pleasure lasts as long as the contact continues of the objects with the senses. The Burdwan translator, not suspecting that the word used is 'adhana,' gives a ridiculous version.—T.

§ What is said here is this: a man has spouses and children, or wealth, &c.: there was no sorrow when these were not: with his union with these his sorrow commences. Hence, when these things disappear, an intelligent man should not indulge in any sorrow. Bonds or attachments are always productive of grief. When bonds are severed or destroyed, there ought to be no grief.—T.

stomach with the aid of patience. One should protect one's hands and feet with the aid of the eye. One's eyes and ears and the other senses should be protected by the mind. One's mind and speech should be ruled with the aid of wisdom.¹⁸ Casting off love¹⁹ and affection for persons that are known as well as for those that are unknown, one should conduct oneself with humility. Such a person is said to be possessed of wisdom, and such a one surely finds happiness.²⁰ That man who is pleased with his own Soul,^{*} who is devoted to Yoga, who depends upon nothing out of self, who is without cupidity, and who conducts himself without the assistance of anything but his self, succeeds in attaining to felicity.—"²¹

SECTION CCCXXXII.

"Nārada said,—When the vicissitudes of happiness and sorrow appear or disappear, the transitions are incapable of being prevented by either wisdom or policy or exertion.¹ Without allowing oneself to fall away from one's true nature, one should strive one's best for protecting one's own Self. He who betakes himself to such care and exertion, has never to languish. Regarding Self as something dear, one should always seek to rescue oneself from decrepitude, death, and disease.² Mental and physical diseases afflict the body, like keen-pointed shafts shot from the bow by a strong bowman.³ The body of a person that is tortured by thirst, that is agitated by agony, that is perfectly helpless, and that is desirous of prolonging his life, is dragged towards destruction.⁴ Days and nights are ceaselessly running, bearing away in their current the periods of life of all human beings. Like currents of rivers, these flow ceaselessly without ever turning back.⁵ The ceaseless succes-

* *I. e.*, whose pleasures do not depend upon external objects such as spouses and children, &c.—T.

† 'Vidhitsuābhīh' is 'pipāsābhīh.' It comes from 'dhe' meaning 'drinking.'—T.

‡ Vyāsa lived in northern India and was evidently unacquainted with the tides that appear in the Bengal rivers.—T.

sion of the lighted and the dark fortnights is wasting all mortal creatures without stopping for even a moment in this work.* Rising and setting day after day, the Sun, who is himself undecaying, is continually cooking the joys and sorrows of all men.† The nights are ceaselessly going away, taking with them the good and bad incidents that befall man, that depend on destiny, and that are unexpected by him.‡ If the fruits of man's acts were not dependent on other circumstances; then one would obtain whatever object one would desire.§ Even men of restrained senses, of cleverness, and of intelligence, if destitute of acts, never succeed in earning any fruits.*10 Others, though destitute of intelligence and unendued with accomplishments of any kind, and who are really the lowest of men, are seen, even when they do not long after success, to be crowned with the fruition of all their desires.†11 Some one else, who is always ready to do acts of injury to all creatures, and who is engaged in deceiving all the world, is seen to wallow in happiness.‡12 Some one that sits idly, obtains great prosperity; while another, by exerting earnestly, is seen to miss desirable fruits almost within his reach.†13 Do thou ascribe it as one of the faults of man! The vital seed, originating in one's nature from sight of one person, goes to another person.‡14 When imparted to the womb, it sometimes produces an embryo and sometimes fails. When sexual congress fails, it resembles a mango tree that puts forth a great many flowers without, however, producing a single fruit.§15 As regards some men who are desirous of

* The object of this Verse is to show the utility and necessity of acts. Without acting, no one, however clever, can earn any fruit. Both the Vernacular translators give ridiculous versions of this plain aphorism.—T.

† 'Agi' is used in the sense of 'ākāṅkshā.'—T.

‡ 'Nāprāpyamadhigachchati' is 'na āprāyam &c.'—T.

§ I do not quite understand in what the fault lies that is referred to here. Perhaps the sense is this. In Hindu physiology, the vital seed is said to be generated by the sight of a desirable woman. When sexual congress takes place with one whose sight has not originated the vital seed but with another, it fails to be productive. Whoever indulges in such intercourse is to blame.—T.

having offspring and who, for the fruition of their object, strive heartily (by worshipping diverse deities), they fail to procreate an embryo in the womb.¹⁶ Some person again, who fears the birth of an embryo as one fears a snake of virulent poison, finds a long-lived son born unto him and who seems to be his own self come back to the stages through which he has passed.¹⁷ Many persons with ardent longing for offspring and cheerless on that account, after sacrificing to many deities and undergoing severe austerities, at last beget children, duly borne for ten long months (in the wombs of their spouses), that prove to be veritable wretches of their race.¹⁸ Others, who have been obtained through virtue of such blessed rites and observances, at once obtain wealth and grain and diverse other sources of enjoyment earned and stored by their sires.¹⁹ In an act of congress, when two persons of opposite sexes come into contact with one another, the embryo takes birth in the womb, like a calamity afflicting the mother.²⁰ Very soon after the suspension of the vital breaths, other physical forms possess that embodied creature whose gross body has been destroyed but whose acts have all been performed with that gross body made of flesh and phlegm.*²¹ Upon the dissolution of the body, another body, which is as much destructible as the one that is destroyed, is kept ready for the burnt and destroyed creature (to migrate into) even as one boat goes to another for transferring to itself the passengers of the other.†²² In

* 'Paraṇarirāṇi' has 'prāpnuvanti' understood after it. 'Cchinna-vijam' means 'whose seed has been broken,' that is, the creature whose gross body has met with destruction. The gross body is called the 'vijam' or seed of (heaven and hell). The sense of the Verse is that every one, after death, attains to a new body. A creature can never exist without the bonds of body being attached to him. Of course, the case is otherwise with persons who succeed in achieving their Emancipation by the destruction of all acts. The Burdwan translator, following the Commentator faithfully, renders this Verse correctly. K. P. Singha skips over it entirely.—T.

† This is not a difficult Verse. Then, again, the Commentator explains it carefully. K. P. Singha gives a ridiculous version. The Burdwan translator is correct. 'Nirdagdham' and 'vinaṣyantam'

consequence of an act of congress, a drop of the vital seed, that is inanimate, is cast into the womb. I ask thee, through whose or what care is the embryo kept alive?" That part of the body into which the food that is eaten goes and where it is digested, is the place where the embryo resides, but it is not digested there.³⁴ In the womb, amid urine and fæces, one's sojourn is regulated by Nature. In the matter of residence therein or escape therefrom, the born creature is not a free agent. In fact, in these respects, he is perfectly helpless.³⁵ Some embryos fall from the womb (in an undeveloped state). Some come out alive (and continue to live). While as regards some, they meet with destruction in the womb, after being quickened with life, in consequence of some other bodies being ready for them (through the nature of their acts).³⁶ That man who, in an act of sexual congress, injects the vital fluid, obtains from it a son or daughter. The offspring thus obtained, when the time comes, takes part in a similar act of congress.³⁷ When the allotted period of a person's life is at its close, the five primal elements of his body attain to the seventh and the ninth stages and then cease to be. The person, however, undergoes no change.^{†38} Without doubt, when persons are afflicted by diseases as little animals assailed by hunters,

imply the dying or dead Jiva' 'Paradeham chalāchalam āhitām bhavati' means 'another body, as much subject to destruction, is kept ready'.—T.

* I expand this Verse a little for bringing out its meaning. What is said here is that some come out of the womb alive; some die there before being quickened with life: and some die there after being quickened with life, the reason being that their acts of past lives bring for them other bodies even at that stage.—T.

† This Verse is certainly a *crux*. The Commentator, I think, displays considerable ingenuity in explaining it. The order of the words is 'Gatāyushah tasya sahajātasya pancha saptamim navamim daçām prāpnuvanti; tatah na bhavanti; sa na.' The ten stages of a person's life are (1) residence within the womb, (2) birth, (3) infancy, up to 5 years, (4) childhood, up to 12 years, (5) *Pauganda*, up to 16 years, (6) youth, up to 48 years, (7) old age, (8) decrepitude, (9) suspension of breath, (10) destruction of body.—T.

they then lose the power of rising up and moving about.²⁹ If when men are afflicted by diseases, they wish to spend even vast wealth, physicians with their best efforts fail to alleviate their pain.³⁰ Even physicians, that are well-skilled and well-up in their scriptures and well-equipped with excellent medicines, are themselves afflicted by disease like animals assailed by hunters.³¹ Even if men drink many astringents and diverse kinds of medicated *ghee*, they are seen to be broken by decrepitude like trees by strong elephants.³² When animals and birds and beasts of prey and poor men are afflicted by ailments, who treats them with medicines? Indeed, these are not seen to be ill.³³ Like larger animals assailing smaller ones, ailments are seen to afflict even terrible kings of fierce energy and invincible prowess.³⁴ All men, reft of the power of even uttering cries indicative of pain, and overwhelmed by error and grief, are seen to be borne away along the fierce current into which they have been thrown.³⁵ Embodied creatures, even when seeking to conquer nature, are unable to conquer it with the aid of wealth, of sovereign power, or of the austere penances.³⁶ If all attempts men make were crowned with success, then men would never die, would never be subject to decrepitude, would never come upon anything disagreeable, and lastly would be crowned with fruition in respect of all their wishes.³⁷ All men wish to attain to gradual superiority of position. To gratify this wish they strive to the best of their power. The result, however, does not agree with their wish.^{†38} Even men that are perfectly heedful, that are honest, and brave and endured

* 'Niyuktāh' means employed. I take it to imply 'employed in the task of conquering Nature'. It may also mean, 'set to their usual, tasks by the influence of past acts'. Nature here means, of course the grand laws to which human existence is subject, *viz.*, the law of birth, of death, of disease and decrepitude, &c.—T.

† 'Uparyupari' implies gradual superiority. If one becomes wealthy, one desires to be a councillor; if a councillor, one wishes to the prime minister; and so on. The sense of the Verse is that man's desire to rise is unsatiable.—T.

with prowess, are seen to pay their adorations to men intoxicated with the pride of affluence and with even alcoholic stimulants.*³⁹ Some men are seen whose calamities disappear before even these are marked or noticed by them. Others there are who are seen to possess no wealth but who are free from misery of every kind.⁴⁰ A great disparity is observable in respect of the fruits that wait upon conjunctions of acts. Some are seen to bear vehicles on their shoulders, while some are seen to ride on those vehicles.⁴¹ All men are desirous of affluence and prosperity. A few only have cars (and elephants and steeds) dragged (or walking) in their processions. Some there are that fail to have a single spouse when their first-wedded ones are dead; while others have hundreds of spouses to call their own.⁴² Misery and happiness are the two things that exist side by side. Men have either misery or happiness. Behold, this is a subject of wonder! Do not, however, suffer thyself to be stupefied by error at such a sight!⁴³ Cast off both Righteousness and sin! Cast off also truth and falsehood! Having cast off both truth and falsehood, do thou then cast off that with whose aid thou shalt cast off the former!⁴⁴ O best of Rishis, I have now told thee that which is a great mystery! With the aid of such instructions, the deities (who were all human beings) succeeded in leaving the Earth for becoming the denizens of heaven!⁴⁵—

“Hearing these words of Nārada, Cuka, endued with great intelligence and possessed of tranquillity of mind, reflected upon the drift of the instructions he received, but could not arrive at any certainty of conclusion.” He understood that one suffers great misery in consequence of the accession of children and spouses; that one has to undergo great labour for the acquisition of science and Vedic lore. He, therefore, asked himself, saying,—What is that situation which is eternal and which is free from misery of every kind but in which there is great prosperity?⁴⁷—

* The reading I prefer is ‘aṣṭhāh’ and not ‘gāthāh’. If the latter reading be kept, it would mean, men of both descriptions are seen to pay court to the wicked.—T.

Reflecting for a moment upon the course ordained for him to run through, Cuka, who was well acquainted with the beginning and the end of all duties, resolved to attain to the highest end that is fraught with the greatest felicity.⁴⁸ He questioned himself, saying,—How shall I, tearing all attachments and becoming perfectly free, attain to that excellent end? How, indeed, shall I attain to that excellent situation whence there is no return into the ocean of diverse kinds of birth!⁴⁹ I desire to obtain that condition of existence whence there is no return! Casting off all kinds of attachments, arrived at certainty by reflection with the aid of the mind, I shall attain to that end!⁵⁰ I shall attain to that situation in which thy Soul will have tranquillity, and when I shall be able to dwell for eternity without being subject to decrepitude or change.⁵¹ It is, however, certain that that high end cannot be attained without the aid of Yoga. One that has attained to the state of perfect knowledge and enlightenment never receives an accession of low attachments through acts.^{*52} I shall, therefore, have recourse to Yoga, and casting off this body which is my present residence, I shall transform myself into a wind and enter that mass of effulgence which is represented by the sun.^{†53} When Jiva enters that mass of effulgence, he no longer suffers like Shoma who, with the gods, upon the exhaustion of merit, falls down on the Earth and having once more acquired sufficient merit returns to heaven.^{‡54} The

* 'Avavandhah' is low attachments, implying those that appertain to the body. In fact, the acquisition of the body itself is such an attachment. What is said here is that that Jiva who has become enlightened becomes freed from the obligation of rebirth or contact with body once more.—T.

† The mass of effulgence constituting the Sun is nothing else than Brahma. Brahma is pure effulgence. 'Savitri-mandala-madhyavartir-Nārāyanah' does not mean a deity with a physical form in the midst of the solar effulgence but incorporeal and universal Brahma. That effulgence is adored in the Gāyatri.—T.

‡ The Commentator takes 'Shomah' to mean 'Shomagath Jivah'. He does not explain the rest of the Verse. The grammatical construction presents no difficulty. If, 'Shomah' be taken in the sense in

Moon is always seen to wane and once more wax. Seeing this waning and waxing that go on repeatedly, I do not wish to have a form of existence in which there are such changes.⁵⁶ The Sun warms all the worlds by means of his fierce rays. His disc never undergoes any diminution. Remaining unchanged, he drinks energy from all things. Hence, I desire to go into the Sun of blazing effulgence.*⁵⁶ There I shall live, invincible by all, and in my inner soul freed from all fear, having cast off this body of mine in the solar region.⁵⁷ With the great Rishis I shall enter the unbearable energy of the Sun. I declare unto all creatures, unto these trees, these elephants, these mountains, the Earth herself, the several points of the compass, the welkin,⁵⁸ the deities, the Dānavas, the Gandharvas, the Piçāchas, the Urugas, and the Rākshasas, that I shall, verily, enter all creatures in the world.†⁵⁸ Let all the gods with the Rishis behold the prowess of my Yoga today!—Having said these words, Cuka, informed Nārada of world-wide celebrity of his intention.⁶⁰ Obtaining Nārada's permission, Cuka then proceeded to where his sire was. Arrived at his presence, the great Muni, viz., the high-souled and Island-born Krishna, Cuka walked round him and addressed him the usual enquiries.⁶¹ Hearing of Cuka's intention, the high-souled Rishi became highly pleased. Addressing him, the great Rishi said,—O son, O dear son, do thou stay here today so that I may behold thee for some time for gratifying

which the Commentator explains it, the meaning would be this. He who enters the solar effulgence has not to undergo any change, unlike 'Shomah' and the deities who have to undergo changes, for they fall down upon the exhaustion of their merits and re-ascend when they once more acquire merit. Both the vernacular translators have made a mess of the Verse. The fact is, there are two paths, 'archirādi-mārgah' and 'dhumādi-mārgah'. They who go by the former reach Brahma and have never to return. While they who go by the latter way, enjoy felicity for some time and then come back.—T.

* Here, the words Sun and Moon are indicative of the two different paths mentioned in the note immediately before.—T.

† What Cuka says here is that he would attain to universal Brahma and thus identify himself with all things.—T.

my eyes!"—Cuka, however, was indifferent to that request. Freed from affection and all doubt, he began to think only of Emancipation, and set his heart on the journey." Leaving his sire, that foremost of Rishis then proceeded to the spacious breast of Kailāsa which was inhabited by crowds of ascetics crowned with success.' "4

SECTION CCCXXXIII.

"Bhishma said,—'Having ascended the summit of the mountain, O Bhārata, the son of Vyāsa sat down upon a level spot free from blades of grass and retired from the haunts of other creatures.¹ Agreeably to the direction of the scriptures and to the ordinances laid down, that ascetic, conversant with the gradual order of the successive processes of Yoga, held his soul first in one place and then in another, commencing from his feet and proceeding through all the limbs.² Then when the Sun had not risen long, Cuka sat, with his face turned Eastwards, and hands and feet drawn in, in a humble attitude.³ In that spot where the intelligent son of Vyāsa sat prepared to address himself to Yoga, there were no flocks of birds, no sound, and no sight that was repulsive or terror-inspiring.⁴ He then beheld his own Soul freed from all attachments. Beholding that highest of all things, he laughed in joy.⁵ He once more set himself to Yoga for attaining to the path of Emancipation. Becoming the great master of Yoga, he transcended the element of space.⁶ He then circumambulated the celestial Rishi Nārada, and represented unto that foremost of Rishis the fact of his having addressed himself to the highest Yoga.'

" 'Cuka said,—I have succeeded in beholding the path (of Emancipation). I have addrest myself to it. Blessed be thou, O thou of wealth of penances! I shall, through thy grace, O thou of great splendour, attain to an end that is highly desirable!'—"

* 'Jahāsa hāsam' is an instance in Sanskrit of the cognate government of neuter verbs.—T.

“Bhishma said,—‘Having received the permission of Nārada, Cuka the son of the Island-born Vyāsa saluted the celestial Rishi and once more set himself to Yoga and entered the element of space.’ Ascending then from the breast of the Kailāsa mountain, he soared into the sky. Capable of traversing through the welkin, the blessed Cuka of fixed conclusion, then identified himself with the element of Wind.¹⁰ As that foremost of regenerate ones, possessed of effulgence like that of Garuda, was traversing through the skies with the speed of the wind or thought, all creatures cast their eyes upon him.¹¹ Endued with the splendour of fire or the Sun, Cuka then regarded the three worlds in their entirety as one homogeneous Brahma, and proceeded along that path of great length.¹² Indeed, all creatures, mobile and immobile, cast their eyes upon him as he proceeded with concentrated attention, and a tranquil and fearless soul.¹³ All creatures, agreeably to the ordinance and according to their power, worshipped him with reverence. The denizens of heaven rained showers of celestial flowers upon him.¹⁴ Beholding him, all the tribes of Apsaras and Gandharvas became filled with wonder. The Rishis also, that were crowned with success, became equally amazed.¹⁵ And they asked themselves,—Who is this one that has attained to success by his penances? With gaze withdrawn from his own body but turned upwards, he is filling us all with pleasure by his glances!¹⁶—Of highly righteous soul and celebrated throughout the three worlds, Cuka proceeded in silence, his face turned towards the East and gaze directed towards the Sun. As he proceeded, he seemed to fill the entire welkin with an all-pervading noise.¹⁷ Beholding him coming in that way, all the tribes of the Apsaras, struck with awe, O king, became filled with amazement.¹⁸ Headed by Panchachudā and others, they looked at Cuka with eyes expanded by wonder. And they asked one another, saying,—What deity is this one that has attained to such a high end? Without doubt, he comes hither, freed from all attachments and emancipated from all desire!¹⁹—Cuka then proceeded to the Malaya mountains where

Urvaçi and Purvachitti used to always dwell.²⁰ Both of them, beholding the energy of the son of the great regenerate Rishi, became filled with wonder. And they said,—Wonderful is this concentration of attention (to Yoga) of a regenerate youth who was accustomed to the recitation and study of the Vedas! Soon will he traverse the entire welkin like the Moon. It was by dutiful service and humble ministrations towards his sire that he acquired this excellent understanding.²¹⁻²² He is firmly attached to his sire, possessed of austere penances, and is very much loved by his sire. Alas, why has he been dismissed by his inattentive father to proceed (thus) along a way whence there is no return?²³—Hearing these words of Urvaçi, and attending to their import, Cuka, that foremost of all persons conversant with duties, cast his eyes on all sides,²⁴ and once more beheld the entire welkin, the whole Earth with her mountains and waters and forests, and also all the lakes and rivers.²⁵ All the deities also, of both sexes, joining their hands, paid reverence to the son of the Island-born Rishi and gazed at him with wonder and respect.²⁶ That foremost of all righteous men, Cuka, addressing all of them, said these words,—If my sire follow me and repeatedly call after me by my name,²⁷ do all of you together return him an answer for me. Moved by the affection all of you bear for me, do you accomplish this request of mine!²⁸—Hearing these words of Cuka, all the points of the compass, all the forests, all the seas, all the rivers, and all the mountains, answered him from every side, saying,²⁹—We accept thy command, O regenerate one! It shall be as thou sayest! It is in this way that we answer the words spoken by the Rishi!—’ ”³⁰

SECTION CCCXXXIV.

“Bhishma said,—‘Having spoken in this way (unto all things), the regenerate Rishi of austere penances, *viz.*, Cuka, stayed on his success, casting off the four kinds of faults,¹ Casting off also the eight kinds of Tamas, he dis-

missed the five kinds of Rajas. Endued with great intelligence, he then cast off the attribute of Sattwa. All this seemed exceedingly wonderful.³ He then dwelt in that eternal station that is destitute of attributes, freed from every indication, that is, in *Brahma*, blazing like a smokeless fire.⁴ Meteors began to shoot. The points of the compass seemed to be ablaze. The Earth trembled. All these phenomena seemed exceedingly wonderful.⁵ The trees began to cast off their branches and the mountains their summits. Loud-reports (as of thunder) were heard that seemed to rive the Himavat mountains.⁶ The Sun seemed at that moment to be shorn of splendour. Fire refused to blaze forth. The lakes and rivers and seas were all agitated.⁶ Vāsava poured showers of rain of excellent taste and fragrance. A pure breeze began to blow, bearing excellent perfumes.⁷ Cuka, as he proceeded through the welkin, beheld two beautiful summits, one belonging to Himavat and another to Meru. These were in close contact with each other. One of them was made of gold and was, therefore, yellow; the other was white, being made of silver.⁸ Each of them, O Bhārata, was a hundred Yojanas in height and of the same measure in breadth. Indeed, as Cuka journeyed towards the north, he saw those two beautiful summits.⁹ With a fearless heart he dashed against those two summits that were united with each other. Unable to bear the force, the summits were suddenly rent in twain.¹⁰ The sight they thereupon presented, O monarch, was exceedingly wonderful to behold. Cuka pierced through those summits,¹¹ for they were unable to stop his onward course. At this a loud noise arose in heaven, made by the denizens thereof.¹² The Gandharvas and the Rishis also and others that dwelt in that mountain uttered loud cheers at the sight of the mountain being rent in twain and Cuka passing through it. Indeed, O Bhārata, a loud noise was heard everywhere at that moment, consisting of the words—Excellent, Excellent!¹³—He was adored by the Gandharvas and the Rishis, by crowds of Yakhas and Rākshasas, and by all tribes of the Vidyādharas.¹⁴ The entire firmament be-

came strewn with celestial flowers showered from heaven at that moment when Cuka thus pierced through that impenetrable barrier, O monarch!¹⁶ The righteous-souled Cuka then beheld from a high region the celestial stream Mandā-kini of great beauty, running below through a region adorned by many flowering groves and woods.¹⁶ In these waters many beautiful Apsarās were sporting. Beholding Cuka who was bodiless, those unclad aerial beings felt no shame.¹⁷ Learning that Cuka had undertaken his great journey, his sire Vyāsa, filled with affection, followed him behind along the same aerial path.¹⁸ Meanwhile Cuka, proceeding through that region of the firmament that is above the region of the wind, displayed his Yoga-prowess and identified himself with Brahma.*¹⁹ Adopting the subtile path of high Yoga, Vyāsa of austere penances, reached within the twinkling of the eye that spot whence Cuka first undertook his journey.²⁰ Proceeding along the same way, Vyāsa beheld the mountain summit rent in twain and through which Cuka has passed. Encountering the Island-born ascetic, the Rishis began to represent to him the achievements of his son.²¹ Vyāsa, however, began to indulge in lamentations, loudly calling upon his son by name and causing the three worlds to resound with the noise he made.²² Meanwhile, the righteous-souled Cuka, who had entered all things, had become the soul of all things, and had acquired omnipresence, answered his sire by uttering the monosyllable *Bho* in the form of an echo.²³ At this, the entire universe of mobile and immobile creatures, uttering the monosyllable *Bho*, echoed the answer of Cuka.²⁴ From that time to this, when sounds are uttered in mountain-caves or on mountain-breasts, the latter, as if in answer to Cuka, still echo them (with the monosyllable *Bho*).²⁵ Having cast off all the attributes of sound, &c., and showing his Yoga-prowess in the manner of his disappearance, Cuka in this way attained to the highest station.²⁶ Beholding that glory and puissance of his son

* The Rishis knew that the height of the atmosphere is not interminable.—T.

of immeasurable energy, Vyāsa sat down on the breast of the mountain and began to think of his son with grief.²⁷ The Apsarās who were sporting on the banks of the celestial stream Mandākini, seeing the Rishi seated there, became all agitated with shame and lost heart.²⁸ Some of them, to hide their nudity, plunged into the stream, and some entered the groves hard by, and some quickly took up their clothes, at beholding the Rishi.²⁹ (None of them had betrayed any signs of agitation at sight of his son). The Rishi, beholding these movements, understood that his son had been emancipated from all attachments, but that he himself was not freed therefrom. At this he became filled with both joy and shame.³⁰ As Vyāsa was seated there, the auspicious god Civa, armed with Pināka, surrounded on all sides by many deities and Gandharvas and adored by all the great Rishis, came thither.³¹ Consoling the Island-born Rishi who was burning with grief on account of his son, Mahādeva said these words unto him,³²—Thou hadst formerly solicited from me a son possessed of the energy of Fire, Earth, of Water, of Wind, and of Space!³³ Procreated by thy penances, the son that was born unto thee was of that very kind. Proceeding from my grace, he was pure and full of Brahma-energy.³⁴ He has attained to the highest end,—an end that is, which none can win that has not completely subjugated his senses, nor by even any of the deities. Why then, O regenerate Rishi, dost thou grieve for that son?³⁵ As long as the hills will last, as long as the ocean will last, so long will the fame of thy son endure undiminished!³⁶ Through my grace, O great Rishi, thou shalt behold in this world a shadowy form resembling thy son, moving by the side and never deserting thee for a single moment!³⁷—Thus favoured by the illustrious Rudra himself, O Bhārata, the Rishi beheld a shadow of his son by his side. He returned from that place, filled with joy at this.³⁸ I have now told thee, O chief of Bhārata's race, everything regarding the birth and life of Cuka about which thou hadst asked me.³⁹ The celestial Rishi Nārada and the great Yogin Vyāsa had repeatedly told all this to me in days of yore when the subject was suggested in course of conversation.⁴⁰ That

person devoted to tranquillity who hears this sacred history directly connected with the topic of Emancipation is certain to attain to the highest end.' "41

SECTION CCCXXXV.

"Yudhishtira said,—'If a man be a house-holder or Brahmachārin, a forest-recluse or a mendicant, and if he desire to achieve success, what deity should he adore?'¹ Whence can he certainly acquire heaven and whence that which is of the highest benefit (*viz.*, Emancipation)? According to what ordinances should he perform the *homa* in honor of the gods and the *Pitris*?² What is the end to which one goes when one becomes emancipated? What is the essence of Emancipation? What should one do so that one, having attained to heaven, would not have to fall down thence?³ Who is the deity of the deities? And who is the *Pitri* of the *Pitris*? Who is he that is superior to him who is the deity of the deities and the *Pitri* of the *Pitris*? Tell me all this, O Grandsire!⁴

"Bhishma said,—O thou that art well acquainted with the art of questioning, this question that thou hast asked me, O sinless one, is one that touches a deep mystery. One cannot answer it with the aid of the science of argumentation even if one were to strive for a hundred years.⁵ Without the grace of Nārāyana, O king, or an accession of high knowledge, this question of thine is incapable of being answered. Connected though this topic be with a deep mystery, I shall yet, O slayer of foes, expound it to thee!⁶

* In this Section, Bhishma recites to Yudhishtira the fact of Cuka's departure from this world, and Vyāsa's grief at the occurrence. He speaks of the fact as one that had been related to him in bygone times by both Nārada and Vyāsa himself. It is evident from this that the Cuka who recited the *Crīmad-Bhāgavat* to Parikshit the grandson of Yudhishtira, could not possibly be the Cuka who was Vyāsa's son. Orthodox would be staggered at this, for the prevailing impression is that it was Vyāsa's son Cuka who recited the *Bhāgavata* to Parikshit.—T.

† What Bhishma says here is that without faith this subject is incapable of being understood.—T.

In this connection is cited the old history of the discourse between Nārada and the Rishi Nārāyana.⁷ I heard it from my sire that in the Krita age, O monarch, during the epoch of the Self-born Manu, the eternal Nārāyana, the Soul of the universe, took birth as the son of Dharma in a quadruple form, viz., as Nara, Nārāyana, Hāri, and the Self-create Krishna.^{*8-9} Amongst them all, Nārāyana and Nara underwent the severest austerities by repairing to the Himālyan retreat known by the name of Vadari, and riding on their golden cars.¹⁰ Each of those cars was furnished with eight wheels, and made up of the five primal elements, and exceedingly beautiful.† Those original regents of the world who had taken birth as the sons of Dharma, became exceedingly emaciated in person in consequence of the austerities they underwent. Indeed, for those austerities and for their energy, the very deities were unable to look at them.¹¹ Only that deity unto whom they were kind could behold them.¹² Without doubt, with his heart devoted to them, and impelled by a longing desire to behold them, Nārada dropped down on Gandhamādana from a summit of the high mountains of Meru and wandered over all the world.¹³ Possessed of great speed, he at last repaired to that spot whereon was situate the retreat of Vadari. Impelled by curiosity he entered that retreat at the hour of Nara's and Nārāyana's performing their daily rites.¹⁴ He said unto himself,—This is truly the retreat of that Being in whom are established all the worlds including the deities, the Asuras, the Gandharvas, the Kinnaras, and the great snakes!¹⁵ There was only one form of this great Being before. That form took birth in four shapes for the expansion of the race

* This is a triplet. The last word of the third line, viz., 'Swayambhuvah' refers to 'Krishnah,' but it has no especial meaning. It is an adjective used more for the sake of measure than for anything else.—T.

† The golden cars referred to here are the fleshy bodies of the two deities. The body is called the car because like the car, it is propelled by some force other than the Soul which owns it for a time, the Soul being inactive. It is regarded as golden because every one becomes attached to it as something very valuable. The eight wheels are Avidyā and the rest.—T.

of Dharma which have been reared by that deity.¹⁸ How wonderful it is that Dharma has thus been honored by these four great deities, *viz.*, Nara, Nārāyana, Krishna, and Hari !¹⁷ In this spot Krishna and Hari dwelt formerly. The other two, however, *viz.*, Nara and Nārāyana, are now dwelling here engaged in penances for the object of enhancing their merit.¹⁸ These two are the highest refuge of the universe. What can be the nature of the daily rites these two perform ? They are the sires of all creatures, and the illustrious deities of all beings. Endued with high intelligence, what is that deity whom these two worship ? Who are those Pitris whom these two Pitris of all beings adore ?¹⁹—Thinking of this in his mind, and filled with devotion towards Nārāyana, Nārada suddenly appeared before those two gods.²⁰ After those two deities had finished their adorations to *their* deities and the *Rishis*, they looked at the celestial Rishi arrived at their retreat. The latter was honored with those eternal rites that are ordained in the scriptures.²¹ Beholding that extraordinary conduct of the two original deities in themselves worshipping other deities and Pitris, the illustrious Rishi Nārada took his seat there, well pleased with the honors he had received.²² With a cheerful soul he cast his eyes then on Nārāyana, and bowing unto Mahādeva he said these words.²³

“Nārada said,—In the Vedas and the Purānas, in the Angas and the subsidiary Angas, thou art sung with reverence ! Thou art unborn and eternal ! Thou art the Creator ! Thou art the mother of the universe ! Thou art the embodiment of Immortality and thou art the foremost of all things. The Past and the Future, indeed, the entire universe has been established on thee !²⁴ The four modes of life, O lord, having the domestic for their first, ceaselessly sacrifice to thee that art of diverse forms.²⁵ Thou art the father and the mother and the eternal preceptor of the universe. We know not who is that deity or that Pitri unto whom thou art sacrificing today !²⁶—

“The holy one said,—This topic is one about which nothing should be said. It is an ancient mystery. Thy devotion to me is very great. Hence, O regenerate one,

I shall discourse to thee on it agreeably to the truth.²⁷ That which is minute, which is inconceivable, unmanifest, immobile, durable, destitute of all connection with the senses and the objects of the senses, that which is dissociated from the (five) elements,²⁸—that is called the in-dwelling Soul of all existent creatures. That is known by the name of Kṣhetrajña. Transcending the three attributes of Sattwa, Rajas, and Tamas, that is regarded as Puruṣha in the scriptures.²⁹ From Him hath followed the unmanifest, O foremost of regenerate ones, possessed of the three attributes of Sattwa, Rajas, and Tamas. Though really unmanifest, she is called indestructible Prakṛiti and dwell in all manifest forms.³⁰ Know that She is the source whence we two have sprung. That all-pervading Soul, which is made up of all existent and non-existent things, is adored by us. Even He is what we worship in all those rites that we perform in honor of the deities and the Pitris.³¹ There is no higher deity or Pitri than He, O regenerate one! He should be known as our Soul. It is Him that we worship.³² This course of duties followed by men has, O regenerate one, been promulgated by Him. It is His ordinance that we should duly perform all the rites laid down in respect of the deities and the Pitris.³³ Brahman, Sthānu, Manu, Dakṣha, Bhrigu, Dharma, Yama, Marichi, Angiras, Atri, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu,³⁴ Vāṣiṣṭha, Parameshthi, Vivasvat, Shoma, he that has been called Karddama, Krodha, Avāk, and Kṛita,³⁵—these one and twenty persons, called Prajāpatis, were first born. All of them obeyed the eternal law of the Supreme God.³⁶ Observing all the rites, in detail, that were ordained in honor of the deities and the Pitris, all those foremost of regenerate persons acquired all those objects which they sought.³⁷ The incorporeal denizens of Heaven itself bow to that Supreme deity and through His grace they attain to those fruits and that end which He ordains for them.³⁸ This is the settled conclusion of the scriptures that those persons that are freed from these seven and ten attributes, (*viz.*, the five senses of knowledge, the five senses of action, the five vital breaths, and mind and

understanding), that have cast off all acts, and that are divested of the five and ten elements which constitute the gross body, are said to be Emancipate.³⁹ That which the Emancipate attain to as their ultimate end is called by the name of Kshetrajna. He is regarded (in the scriptures) as both possessed of and freed from all the attributes.⁴⁰ He can be apprehended by Knowledge alone. We two have sprung from Him. Knowing him in that way, we adore that eternal Soul of all things.⁴¹ The Vedas and all the modes of life, though characterised by divergences of opinion, all worship Him with devotion. It is He who, speedily moved to grace, confers on them high ends fraught with felicity.⁴² Those persons in this world who, filled with His spirit, become fully and conclusively devoted to Him, attain to ends that are much higher, for they succeed in entering Him and becoming merged in his Self.⁴³ I have now, O Nārada, discoursed to thee on what is a high mystery, moved by the love I bear to thee for thy devotion to me. Indeed, in consequence of that devotion which thou professest towards me, thou hast succeeded in listening to this my discourse !—’ ”⁴⁴

SECTION CCCXXXVI.

“Bhishma said,—‘Addressed by Nārāyana, that foremost of beings, in these words, Nārada, the foremost of men, then said these words unto Nārāyana for the good of the world.¹

“ ‘Nārada said,—Let that object be accomplished for which thou, O Self-born Being, hast taken birth in four forms in the house of Dharma ! I shall now repair (to the White Island) for beholding thy original nature.² I always worship my seniors. I have never divulged the secrets of others. O lord of the universe, I have studied the Vedas with care. I have undergone austerities. I have never spoken an untruth.³ As ordained in the scriptures, I have always protected the four that should be protected.*

* *I. e.* the hands, the feet, the stomach, and the organ of pleasure. The hands are said to be protected when they are restrained from the

I always behave equally towards friends and foes. Wholly and conclusively devoted to Him, that first of deities, viz., the Supreme Soul, I incessantly adore Him.⁴ Having cleansed my soul by these acts of special merit, why shall I not succeed in obtaining a sight of that Infinite Lord of the universe?—Hearing these words of Parameshthi's son, Nārāyana, that protector of the scriptures, said unto him, saying,⁵—Go, O Nārada!—Before dismissing him, however, the great deity worshipped the celestial Rishi with those rites and ceremonies which have been laid down in the scriptures by himself. Nārada also gave due honors to the ancient Rishi Nārāyana. After such honors had been mutually given and received, the son of Parameshthi departed from that spot.⁶ Endued with high Yoga-puissance, Nārada suddenly soared into the firmament and reached the summit of the mountains of Meru. Proceeding to a retired spot on that summit, the great ascetic took rest for a short while.⁷ He then cast his eyes towards the north western direction and behold an exceedingly wonderful sight. Towards the north, in the ocean of Milk, there is a large island named the White Island.⁸ The learned say that its distance from the mountains of Meru is greater than two and thirty thousand Yojanas. The denizens of that realm have no senses. They live without taking food of any kind. Their eyes are winkless. They always emit excellent perfumes.⁹ Their complexions are white. They are cleansed from every sin. They blast the eyes of those sinners that look at them. Their bones and bodies are as hard as thunder. They regard honor and dishonor in the same light. They all look as if they are of celestial origin. All of them are endued, besides, with auspicious marks and great strength.¹⁰ Their heads seem to be like umbrellas. Their voices are

commission of all improper acts ; the feet are said to be duly protected when they are restrained from touching all improper places. The stomach is said to be protected when one never takes any kind of improper food, and when one abstains from all evil acts for appeasing one's hunger. And lastly, one is said to restrain the organ of pleasure when one abstains from all acts of improper congress.—T.

deep like that of the clouds. Each of them have four Mushkas.* The soles of their feet were marked by hundreds of lines. They had sixty teeth all of which were white (and large), and eight smaller ones. They had many tongues. With those tongues they seemed to lick the very Sun whose face is turned towards every direction.¹¹ Indeed, they seemed to be capable of devouring that great deity from whom hath sprung the entire universe, the Vedas, the duties, and the Munis wedded to the attribute of tranquillity.¹²

“Yudhishtira said,—‘O grandsire, thou hast said that those beings have no senses, that they do not eat anything for supporting their lives; that their eyes are winkless; and that they always emit excellent perfumes. I ask, how were they born? What also is the superior end to which they attain?’¹³ O chief of Bharata’s race, are the indications of those men that become emancipated the same as those by which the denizens of the White Island are distinguished?¹⁴ Do thou dispel my doubts! The curiosity I feel is very great. Thou art the repository of all histories and discourses. As regards ourselves, we entirely depend on thee for knowledge and instruction!’¹⁵

“Bhishma continued,—‘This narrative, O monarch, which I have heard from my sire, is extensive. I shall now recite it to thee. Indeed, it is regarded as the essence of all narratives.¹⁶ There was, in times past, a king on Earth of the name of Uparichara. He was known to be the friend of Indra the chief of the celestials. He was devoted to Nārāyana called also by the name of Hari.¹⁷ He was observant of all the duties laid down in the scriptures. Ever devoted to his sire, he was always heedful and ready for action. He won the sovereignty of the world in consequence of a boon he had obtained from Nārāyana.¹⁸ Following the *Sattwata* ritual that had been declared in days of yore by Surya himself, king Uparichara used to worship the God of

* The word ‘Mushka’ as ordinarily understood, implies the scrotum or testes. The Commentator Nilakantha supposes that it may stand for the shoulder-knot. He believes that the phrase implies that the people of this Island had each four arms.—T.

gods (Nārāyaṇa), and after his worship was over, to adore (with what remained) the Grandsires of the universe.*¹⁹ After worshipping the Grandsires (Pitris), he worshipped the Brāhmanas. He then divided the offerings among those that were dependent on him. With what remained after serving those, the king satisfied his own hunger. Devoted to truth, the monarch abstained from doing any injury to any creature.²⁰ With his whole soul, the king was devoted to that God of gods, viz., Janārddana, who is without beginning and middle and end, who is the Creator of the universe, and who is without deterioration of any kind.²¹ Beholding the devotion to Nārāyaṇa of that slayer of foes, the divine chief of the celestials himself shared with him his own seat and bed.²² His kingdom and wealth and spouses and animals were all regarded by him as obtained from Nārāyaṇa. He, therefore, offered all his possessions to that great deity.²³ Adopting the *Sattwata* ritual, king Uparichara, with concentrated soul, used to discharge all his sacrificial acts and observances, both optional and obligatory.²⁴ In the palace of that illustrious king, many foremost Brāhmanas, well conversant with the *Pancharātra* ritual, used to eat before all others the food offered to the god Nārāyaṇa.²⁵ As long as that slayer of foes continued to rule his kingdom righteously, no untruth ever escaped his lips and no evil thought ever entered his mind.²⁶ With his limbs he never committed even the slightest sin. The seven celebrated Rishis, viz., Marichi, Atri, Angiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, and Vaçishtha of great energy, who came to be known by the name of Chitra-çikhandins, uniting together on the breast of that foremost of mountains, viz., Meru, promulgated an excellent treatise on duties and observances that was con-

* The 'Sattwata' ritual is explained by the Commentator to mean the 'Pancha-rātra' ritual. 'Tachecheshena' implies 'with what remained after Vishnu's worship was over.'—T.

† I. e., dedicated his possessions to the service of Nārāyaṇa, and held them as the great God's custodian. In other words, he never regarded his wealth as his own, but was always ready to devote it to all good and pious purposes.—T.

sistent with the four Vedas. The contents of that treatise were uttered by seven mouths, and constituted the best compendium of human duties and observances. Known, as already stated, by the name of Chitra-çikhandins, those seven Rishis constitute the seven (Prakriti-) elements (of Mahat, Ahankāra, &c.), and the Self-born Manu, who is the eighth in the enumeration, constituted original Prakriti. These eight uphold the universe, and it was these eight that promulgated the treatise adverted to.²⁷⁻³⁰ With their senses and minds under complete control, and ever devoted to Yoga, these eight ascetics, with concentrated souls, are fully conversant with the Past, the Present, and the Future, and are devoted to the religion of Truth.³¹—This is good,—This is Brahma,—This is highly beneficial,—reflecting in their minds in this way, those Rishis created the worlds, and the science of morality and duty that governs those worlds.³² In that treatise the authors discoursed on Religion and Wealth and Pleasure, and subsequently on Emancipation also. They also laid down in it the various restrictions and limitations intended for the Earth as also for Heaven.³³ They composed that treatise after having worshipped with penances the puissant and illustrious Nārāyana called also Hari, for a thousand celestial years, in company with many other Rishis.³⁴ Gratified with their penances and worship, Nārāyana commanded the goddess of speech, viz., Saraswati, to enter into the persons of those Rishis. The goddess, for the good of the worlds, did what she was ordered.³⁵ In consequence of the entrance of the goddess of speech into their persons, those Rishis, well conversant with penances, succeeded in composing that foremost of treatises in respect of vocables, import, and reason.³⁶ Having composed that treatise sanctified with the syllable *Om*, the Rishis first of all read it to Nārāyana who heard them from kindness.³⁷ The illustrious and incorporeal Nārāyana became highly pleased with what he heard. That foremost

* *I. e.*, the treatise those Rishis composed was the foremost of its kind in respect of choice and harmony of vocables, of import or sense, and of reasons with which every assertion was fortified.—T.

of all Beings then addressed those Rishis in an incorporeal voice and said,³⁹—Excellent is this treatise that ye have composed consisting of a hundred thousand verses. The duties and observances of all the worlds will flow from this your work !⁴⁰ In complete accordānce with the four Vedas, viz., the Yajushes, the Richs, the Sāmāns, and the Atharvans of Angiras, this treatise of yours will be an authority in all the worlds in respect of both Pravritti and Nivritti.⁴⁰ Agreeably to the authority of the scriptures I have created Brahman from the attribute of Grace, Rudra from my Wrath, and yourselves, ye Brāhmanas, as representing the Prakriti-elements (of Mahat, Ahankāra, &c.).⁴¹ Surya, and Chandramas, Wind, and Earth, and Water and Fire, all the stars and planets and constellations, all else that is called by the name of creatures,⁴² and utterers of Brahma (or the Vedas), all live and act in their respective spheres and are 'all respected as authorities. Even this treatise that ye have composed shall be regarded by all persons in the same light, viz., as a work of the highest authority. This is my command. Guided by this treatise, the Self-born Manu himself will declare to the world its course of duties and observances.⁴³⁻⁴⁴ When Uçanas and Vrihaspati will arise, they also will promulgate their respective treatises on morality and religion, guided by and quoting from this your treatise ![†]⁴⁵ After the publication of his treatise by the Self-born Manu and of that by Uçanas, and after the publication of the treatise also by Vrihaspati,⁴⁶ this science composed by you will be acquired by king Vasu (otherwise

* There are two religious, viz., that of Pravritti, implying acts and observances, and that of Nivritti, implying a complete abstention from all acts and observances. The last is also called the religion of Emancipation.—T.

† Whether any work on morality and religion was ever actually composed by the seven Rishis or not, no such work, it is certain, is in existence now. Besides this mention of the work in the Mahā-bhārata, no reference to it has been made anywhere else. As to 'Cukra-niti', it is extant. Vrihaspati's 'niti-çāstram' is defunct. It is probable, however, that before 'Cukra-niti', there was an anterior work, brief if not exhaustive, on the same subjects.—T.

known by the name of Uparichara). Indeed, ye foremost of regenerate ones, that king will acquire this knowledge of this work from Vrihaspati.⁴⁷ That King, filled with all good thoughts, will become deeply devoted to me. Guided by this treatise, he will accomplish all his religious acts and observances.⁴⁸ Verily, this treatise composed by you will be the foremost of all treatises on morality and religion. Possessed of excellence, this treatise is fraught with instructions for acquiring both Wealth and Religious merit, and is full of mysteries.⁴⁹ In consequence of the promulgation of this treatise of yours, ye will be progenitors of an extensive race ! King Uparichara also will become endued with greatness and prosperity.⁵⁰ Upon the death, however, of that king, this eternal treatise will disappear from the world. I tell you all this !⁵¹—Having said these words unto all those Rishis, the invisible Nārāyana left them and proceeded to some place that was not known to them.⁵² Then those sires of the world, those Rishis that bestowed their thoughts on the ends pursued by the world, duly promulgated that treatise which is the eternal origin of all duties and observances.⁵³ Subsequently, when Vrihaspati was born in Angiras's race in the first or the Krita age, those seven Rishis charged him with the task of promulgating their treatise which was consistent with the Upanishads and the several branches of the Vedas.⁵⁴ They themselves who were upholders of the universe and the first promulgators of duties and religious observances, then proceeded to the place they chose, resolved to devote themselves to penances.' ”⁵⁵

SECTION CCCXXXVII.

“Bhishma said,—‘Then, upon the expiration of the great Kalpa, when the celestial Purohita Vrihaspati was born in the race of Angiras, all the deities became very happy.’¹ The words *Vrihat*, *Brahma*, and *Mahat* all bear the same sense.* The celestial Purohita, O king, came to be called

* ‘Paryyāyā’ literally means a list. The fact is, in all Sanskrit

Vrihaspati because he was endued with all these attributes.* King Uparichara, otherwise called Vasu, became a disciple of Vrihaspati and soon became the foremost of his disciples. Admitted as such, he began to study at the feet of his preceptor that science which was composed by the seven Rishis who were (otherwise) known by the name of Chitra-çikhandins.† With soul cleansed from all evil by sacrifices and other religious rites, he ruled the Earth like Indra ruling the Heaven.‡ The illustrious king performed a great Horse-sacrifice in which his preceptor Vrihaspati became the *Hotri*.§ The sons of Prajāpati (Brahman) themselves, viz., Ekata, Dwita, and Trita, became the *Sadasyas* in that sacrifice,** There were others also who became *Sadasyas* in that sacrifice, viz., Dhanusha, Raivya, Arvāvasu, Parāvasu, the Rishi Medhātithi, the great Rishi Tāndya,‡ the blessed Rishi Cānti, he called Vedaçiras, the foremost of Rishis, viz., Kapila,* who was the father of Cālihotra,§ the first Kalpa, Tittiri the elder brother of Vaiçampāyana, Kanwa, and Devahotra, forming in all sixteen.¶ In that great sacrifice, O monarch, all the requisite articles were collected. No animals were slain in it. The king had ordained it so.‡ He was full of compassion. Of pure and liberal mind, he had cast off all desire, and was well-conversant with all rites. The requisites of that sacrifice all consisted of the productions of the wilderness.‡ The ancient God of gods (viz., Hari), became highly gratified with the king on account of that sacrifice. Incapable of being seen by any one else, the great God showed himself to his worshipper.‡ Accepting by taking its scent, the share offered to him he himself took up

lexicons, words expressive of the same meanings occur together. These lists are known by the name of 'Paryāya'. A more definite idea of the meaning of this word may be had by the English reader when he remembers that in a lexicon like Roget's *Thesaurus*, groups are given of words expressive of the same signification. Such groups are called 'Paryāyas'.—T.

* The *Hotri* has to pour libations on the sacrificial fire, reciting *mantras* the while. 'Sadasyas' are persons that watch the sacrifice, i. e., take care that the ordinances of the scriptures are duly complied with. They are, what is called, 'Vidhi-darçinas'.—T.

the *Purodāṣa*.^{*} The great God took up the offerings without being seen by any one.¹³ At this, Vrihaspati became angry. Taking up the ladle he hurled it with violence at the sky, and began to shed tears in wrath.¹⁴ Addressing king Uparichara he said,—Here, I place this as Nārāyaṇa's share of the sacrificial offerings! Without doubt, he shall take it before my eyes!¹⁵—

“Yudhishtira said,—‘In the great sacrifice of Uparichara, all the deities appeared in their respective forms for taking their shares of the sacrificial offerings and were seen by all. Why is it that the puissant Hari only acted otherwise by invisibly taking his share?’¹⁶”

“Bhishma continued,—‘When Vrihaspati gave way to wrath, the great king Vasu and all his Sadasyas sought to pacify the great Rishi.¹⁷ With cool heads, all of them addressed Vrihaspati, saying,—It behooveth thee not to give way to anger! In this Krita age, this anger to which thou hast given way should not be the characteristic of any one!¹⁸ The great deity for whom the share of the sacrificial offerings was designed by thee, is himself free from anger! He is incapable of being seen either by ourselves or by thee, O Vrihaspati!¹⁹ Only he can see Him to whom He becomes gracious!—Then the Rishis Ekata, Dwita, and Trita, who were well conversant with the science of morality and duties compiled by the seven Rishis, addressed that conclave and began the following narration.²⁰—We are the sons of Brhman, begotten by a fiat of his will (and not in the ordinary way). Once on a time we repaired to the north for obtaining what is for our highest good.²¹ Having undergone penances for thousands of years and acquired great ascetic merit, we again stood on only one foot like fixed stakes of wood.²² The country where we underwent these austerest of penances, lies to the north of the mountains of Meru and on the shores of the ocean of milk.²³ The object we had in mind was how to behold the divine Nārāyaṇa in his own form. Upon the

* Clarified butter offered in sacrifices, with cakes of powdered barley steeped in it.—T.

completion of our penances and after we had performed the final ablutions, an incorporeal voice was heard by us, O puissant Vrihaspati, at once deep as that of the clouds and exceedingly sweet and filling the heart with joy.²⁴ The voice said,—Ye Brāhmanas, well have ye performed these penances with cheerful souls! Devoted unto Nārāyana, ye seek to know how ye may succeed in beholding that god of great puissance!²⁵ On the northern shores of the ocean of milk there is an island of great splendour called by the name of White Island. The men that inhabit that island have complexions as white as the rays of the Moon and that are devoted to Nārāyana.²⁶ Worshippers of that foremost of all Beings, they are devoted to Him with their whole souls. They all enter that eternal and illustrious deity of a thousand rays.*²⁷ They are divested of senses. They do not subsist on any kind of food. Their eyes are winkless. Their bodies always emit a fragrance. Indeed, the denizens of White Island believe and worship only One God. Go thither, ye ascetics, for there I have revealed myself!²⁸—All of us, hearing these incorporeal words, proceeded by the way indicated to the country described.²⁹ Eagerly desirous of beholding Him and our hearts full of Him, we arrived at last at that large island called White Island. Arrived there, we could see nothing. Indeed, our vision was blinded by the energy of the great deity and accordingly we could not see Him.†³⁰ At this, the idea, due to the grace of the great

* Professor Weber supposes that in this narrative of the three Rishis Ekata, Dwita, and Trita, the poet is giving a description of either Italy or some island in the Mediterranean, and of a Christian worship that certain Hindu pilgrims might have witnessed. Indeed, a writer in the *Calcutta Review* has gone so far as to say that from what follows, the conjecture would not be a bold one that the whole passage refers to the impression made on certain Hindu pilgrims upon witnessing the celebration of the Eucharist according to the ordinances of the Roman Catholic Church. The Hon'ble K. T. Telang supposes that the whole passage is based on the poet's imagination. 'Ekāntabhāvopagatāh' is taken by some to mean "worshippers of the divine Unity". I do not think that such a rendering would be correct.—T.

† The Bombay reading is 'tadāpratihatā-abhavat'. This seems to

God Himself, arose in our minds that one that had not undergone sufficient penances could not speedily behold Nārāyaṇa.³² Under the influence of this idea we once more set ourselves to the practice of some severe austerities, suited to the time and place, for a hundred years. Upon the completion of our vows, we beheld a number of men of auspicious features.³³ All of them were white and looked like the Moon (in color) and possessed every mark of blessedness. Their hands were always joined in prayer. The faces of some were turned towards the North and of some to the East. They were engaged in silently thinking on Brahma.³⁴ The Yapa performed by those high-souled persons was a *mental yapa* (and did not consist of the actual recitation of any *mantras* in words). In consequence of their hearts having been entirely set upon Him, Hari became highly pleased with them.³⁵ The effulgence that was emitted by each of those men resembled, O foremost of ascetics, the splendours which Surya assumes when the time comes for the dissolution of the universe.³⁶ Indeed, we thought that that Island was the home of all Energy. All the inhabitants were perfectly equal in energy. There was no superiority or inferiority there among them.³⁷ We then suddenly beheld once more a light arise that seemed to be the concentrated effulgence of a thousand Suns, O Vrihaspati.³⁸ The inhabitants, assembling together, ran towards that light, with hands joined in reverential attitude, full of joy, and uttering the one word *Namas* (we bow thee!).³⁹ We then heard a very loud noise uttered by all of them to-

be better than the Bengal reading 'tato-apratihata &c.'. If the Bengal reading be adhered to, 'apratihatah' should be taken in the sense of 'nāsti pratihato-yasmāt'. The meaning, of course, would remain the same.—T.

* 'Yapa' means the silent recitation of certain sacred *mantras* or of the name of some deity. In the case of the inhabitants of White Island, the silent recitation was no recitation of *mantras* or words, but was a meditation on incorporeal Brahma. The next Verse makes this clear.—T.

† This would seem to show that it was the Roman Republic which the pilgrims saw.—T.

gether. It seemed that those men were employed in offering a sacrifice to the great God.³⁹ As regards ourselves, we were suddenly deprived of our senses by his Energy. Deprived of vision and strength and all the senses, we could not see or feel anything.⁴⁰ We only heard a loud volume of sound uttered by the assembled inhabitants. It said,—Victory to thee, O thou of eyes like lotus-petals! Salutations to thee, O Creator of the universe!⁴¹ Salutations to thee, O Hrishi-keça, O foremost of Beings, O thou that art the First-born! —Even this was the sound we heard, uttered distinctly and agreeably to the rules of orthoepy.⁴² Meanwhile, a breeze, fragrant and pure, blew, bearing perfumes of celestial flowers, and of certain herbs and plants that were of use on the occasion.⁴³ Those men, endued with great devotion, possessed of hearts full of reverence, conversant with the ordinances laid down in the *Pancharâtra*, were then worshipping the great deity with mind, word, and deed.⁴⁴ Without doubt, Hari appeared in that place whence the sound we heard arose. As regards ourselves, stupefied by His illusion, we could not see Him.⁴⁵ After the breeze had ceased and the sacrifice had been over, our hearts became agitated with anxiety, O foremost one of Angiras's race!⁴⁶ As we stood among these thousands of men all of whom were of pure descent, no one honored us with a glance or nod.⁴⁷ Those

* Professor Weber thinks that this has reference to the absence of idols or images. The pilgrims saw no deities there such as they had in their own temples.—T.

† Professor Weber wrongly renders the words 'Purvaja' and 'çikshâ-kshara-samanvitah'. The first word does not, as he renders it, imply, 'eldest son of God', but simply 'first-born'. It is seen in almost every hymn in the Mahâbhârata to the Supreme Deity. It is synonymous with 'Adipurusha'. Then 'çikshâ &c.' does not, as he thinks, mean 'accompanied by teaching', but it is the science of Orthoepy and is one of the *Angas* (limbs) of the Vedas. The Vedas were always chaunted melodiously; the science of Orthoepy was cultivated by the Rishis with great care.—T.

‡ The 'Pancha-kâla', or 'Pancha-râtra', or 'Sâttwata vidhi', means certain ordinances laid down by Nârada and other Rishis in respect of the worship of Nârâyana.—T.

ascotics, all of whom were cheerful and filled with devotion and who were all practising the Brahma-frame of mind, showed no kind of feeling for us.*⁴⁸ We had been exceedingly tired. Our penances had emaciated us. At that time, an incorporeal Being addressed us from the sky and said unto us these words.⁴⁹—These white men, who are divested of all outer senses, are competent to behold (Nārāyana). Only those foremost of regenerate persons whom these white men honored with their glances, become competent to behold the great God.^{†50-51} Go hence, ye Munis, to the place whence ye have come! That great Deity is incapable of being ever seen by one that is destitute of devotion!⁵² Incapable of being seen in consequence of his dazzling effulgence, that illustrious Deity can be beheld by only those persons that in course of long ages succeed in devoting themselves wholly and solely to Him. Ye foremost of regenerate ones, ye have a great duty to perform!⁵³ After the expiration of this the Krita age, when the Tretā age comes in course of the Vivasvat cycle, a great calamity will overtake the worlds. Ye Munis, ye shall then have to become the allies of the deities (for dispelling that calamity)⁵⁴—Having heard these wonderful words that were sweet as nectar, we soon got back to the place we desired, through the grace of that great Deity.⁵⁵ When with the aid of even such austere penances and of offerings devoutly given in sacrifices, we failed to have a sight of the great Deity, how, indeed, can you expect to behold Him so easily?⁵⁶ Nārāyana is a Great Being. He is the Creator of the universe. He is adored in sacrifices with offerings of clarified butter and other food dedicated with the aid of Vedic *mantras*. He has no beginning and no end. He is Unmanifest. Both the deities and the Dānavas worship Him!⁵⁷—Induced by these words spoken by Ekata and approved by his companions, viz., Dwita and Trita,

* The sense is this: as all of them were practising that frame of mind which resembles Brahma, they regarded us not, i. e., neither honored nor dishonored us.—T.

† Both the vernacular translators have erred in rendering this simple Verse.—T.

and solicited also by the other Sadasyas, the high-minded Vrihaspati brought that sacrifice to a completion after duly offering the accustomed adorations to the deities.⁵⁸ King Uparichara also, having completed his great sacrifice, began to rule his subjects righteously. At last, casting off his body, he ascended to heaven. After sometime, through the curse of the Brāhmanas, he fell down from those regions of felicity and sank deep into the bowels of the Earth.⁵⁹ King Vasu, O tiger among monarchs, was always devoted to the true religion. Although sunk deep into the bowels of the Earth, his devotion to virtue did not abate.⁶⁰ Ever devoted to Nārāyana, and ever reciting sacred *mantras* having Nārāyana for their deity, he once more ascended to heaven through Nārāyana's grace.⁶¹ Ascending from the bowels of the Earth, king Vasu, in consequence of the very highest end that he attained, proceeded to a spot that is even higher than the region of Brahman himself.*' "⁶²

SECTION CCCXXXVIII.

"Yudhishtira said,—'When the great king Vasu was so wholly devoted to Nārāyana, for what reason then did he fall down from heaven and why again had he to sink beneath the surface of the Earth?' "¹

"Bhishma said,—'In this connection is cited an old narrative, O Bhārata, of a discourse between the Rishis and the gods.¹ The gods, once on a time, addressing many foremost of Brāhmanas, said unto them that sacrifices should be performed by offering up *Ajas* as victims. By the word *Aja* should be understood the goat and no other animal.³

* The construction seems to be this: 'Parāngatimanuprāpta iti Bahmanah samanantaram naishtikam sthānam &c.,' It does not mean, as K. P. Singha puts it, that he proceeded to Brahman's region, nor, as the Burdwan translator puts it, that having gone to Brahman's region he attained to the highest end. The sense, on the other hand, is that as his was the very highest end, he, therefore, ascended to a spot that is higher than Brahman's region. The simple meaning is that king Uparichara attained to identification with Brahma.—T.

“The *Rishis* said,—The Vedic *Ṛṣi* declares that in sacrifices the offerings should consist of (vegetable) seeds. Seeds are called *Ajas*. It behooveth you not to slay goats.⁴ Ye deities, that cannot be the religion of good and righteous people in which the slaughter of animals is laid down. This, again, is the Krita age. How can animals be slaughtered in this epoch of righteousness?⁵—

“Bhishma continued,—‘While this discourse was going on between the *Rishis* and the deities, that foremost of kings, *viz.*, Vasu, was seen to come that way. Endued with great prosperity, the king was coming through the welkin, accompanied by his troops and vehicles and animals.⁶ Beholding king Vasu coming to that spot through the skies, the *Brāhmanas* addressing the deities, said,—This one will remove our doubts!’ He performs sacrifices. He is liberal in making gifts. He always seeks the good of all creatures. How, indeed, will the great Vasu speak otherwise?⁷—Having thus spoken unto each other, the deities and the *Rishis* quickly approached king Vasu and questioned him, saying,—O king, with what should one perform sacrifices?⁸ Should one sacrifice with the goat or with herbs and plants? Do thou dispel this doubt of ours! We constitute thee our judge in this matter.¹⁰—Thus addressed by them, Vasu joined his hands in humility and said unto them,—Tell me truly, ye foremost of *Brāhmanas*, what opinion is entertained by which of you in this matter?¹¹—

“The *Rishis* said,—The opinion entertained by us, O king, is that sacrifices should be performed with grain! The deities, however, maintain that sacrifices should be performed with animals. Do thou judge between us and tell us which of these opinions is correct!¹²—

“Bhishma continued,—‘Learning what the opinion was that was entertained by the deities, Vasu, moved by partiality for them, said that sacrifices should be performed with animals.¹³ At this answer, all the *Rishis*, endued with the splendour of the Sun, became very angry. Addressing Vasu who was seated on his car and who had (wrongly) taken up the side of the deities, they said unto him,¹⁴—Since thou

hast (wrongly) taken up the side of the deities, do thou fall down from heaven ! From this day, O monarch, thou shalt lose the power of journeying through the sky ! Through our curse, thou shalt sink deep below the surface of the Earth !¹⁵ —After the Rishis had said these words, king Uparichara immediately fell down, O monarch, and went down a hole in the Earth. At the command, however, of Nārāyana, Vasu's memory did not leave him.¹⁶ To the good fortune of Vasu, the deities, pained at the curse denounced on him by the Brāhmanas, began to think anxiously as to how that curse might be neutralised.¹⁷ They said,—This high-souled king hath been cursed for our sake. We, denizens of heaven, should unite together for doing what is good to him in return for that which he has done to us !¹⁸—Having quickly settled this in their minds with the aid of reflection, the deities proceeded to the spot where king Uparichara was. Arrived at his presence, they addressed him, saying,¹⁹—Thou art devoted to the great God of the Brāhmanas (*viz.*, Nārāyana) ! That great Lord of both the deities and the Asuras, gratified with thee, will rescue thee from the curse that has been denounced upon thee !²⁰ It is proper, however, that the high-souled Brāhmanas should be honored. Verily, O best of kings, their penances should fructify.*²¹ Indeed, thou hast already fallen down from the sky on the Earth ! We desire, however, O best of kings, to show thee a favor in one respect !²² As long as thou, O sinless one, shalt dwell in this hole, so long shalt thou receive (due sustenance, through our boon) !²³ Those streaks of clarified butter which Brāhmanas with concentrated minds pour in sacrifices in accompaniment with sacred *mantras*, and which are called by the name of *Vasudharā*, shall be thine, through our care for thee ! Indeed, weakness or distress shall not touch thee !†²⁴ While dwelling, O king

* *I. e.*, when they have cursed thee, their curse should fructify. Thou shouldst not do anything that may have the effect of nullifying that curse.—T.

† To this day, in many religious rites, these streaks of *ghee* are poured with *mantras* recited the while. They are called *Vasudharā* and are poured along the surface of a wall. First, a waving line of red

of kings, in the hole of the Earth, neither hunger nor thirst shall afflict thee for thou shalt drink those streaks of clarified butter called *Vasudhārā*. Thy energy also shall continue unabated. In consequence also of this our boon that we grant thee, the God of gods, viz., Nārāyana, will be gratified with thee, and He will bear thee hence to the region of Brahman!¹⁵—Having granted these boons unto the king, the denizens of heaven, as also all those Rishis possessed of wealth of penances, returned each to his respective place.¹⁶ Then Vasu, O Bhārata, began to adore the Creator of the universe and to recite in silence those sacred *mantras* that had come out of Nārāyana's mouth in days of yore.¹⁷ Although dwelling in a pit of the Earth, the king still worshipped Hari, the Lord of all the deities, in the well-known five sacrifices that are performed five times every day, O slayer of foes!¹⁸ In consequence of these adorations of his, Nārāyana, otherwise called Hari, became highly pleased with him who thus showed himself to be entirely devoted to Him, who wholly relied upon Him as his sole refuge, and who had completely subjugated his senses.¹⁹ The illustrious Vishnu, that giver of boons, then addressed Garuda of great speed, that foremost of birds, who waited upon Him as his servant, and said these desirable words:²⁰—O foremost of birds, O thou that art highly blessed, listen to what I say! There is a great king of the name of Vasu who is of righteous soul and rigid vows! Through the wrath of the Brāhmanas, he has fallen into a pit of the Earth.²¹ The Brāhmanas have been sufficiently honored (for their curse has fructified). Do thou go to that king now!²² At my command, O Garuda, go to that foremost of kings, viz., Uparichara, who is now dwelling in a hole of the Earth and incapable of any longer sailing through the sky, and bring him up

is drawn horizontally on the wall. Then seven spots are made under that line. Then with the sacrificial ladle, Ghee is poured from each of the spots in such a way that a thick streak is poured along the wall. The length of those streaks is generally 3 to 4 feet and their breadth about half an inch.—T.

* The *mantras* recited by Vasu were Yedio mantras.—T.

without delay into the welkin!³³ Hearing these words of Vishnu, Garuda, spreading his wings and rushing with the speed of the wind, entered that hole in the Earth in which king Vasu was living.³⁴ Suddenly taking the king up, the son of Vinatā soared into the sky and there released the king from his beaks.³⁵ At that moment, king Uparichara once more acquired his celestial form and re-entered the region of Brahman.³⁶ It was in this way, O son of Kunti, that that great king first fell down through the curse of the Brāhmanas for a fault of speech, and once more ascended to heaven at the command of the great God (Vishnu).³⁷ Only the puissant Lord Hari, that foremost of all Beings, was devoutly worshipped by him. It was for this devout worship that the king succeeded very soon in escaping from the curse denounced upon him by the Brāhmanas and in regaining the felicitous regions of Brahman.³⁸

"Bhishma continued,—'I have thus told thee everything respecting the origin of the spiritual sons of Brahman. Listen to me with undivided attention, for I shall now narrate to thee how the celestial Rishi Nārada had proceeded in days of yore to White Island.'"³⁹

SECTION CCCXXXIX.

"Bhishma said,—'Arrived at the spacious realm called White Island, the illustrious Rishi beheld those same white men possessed of lunar splendour (of whom I have already spoken to thee).¹ Worshipped by them, the Rishi worshipped them in return by bending his head and reverencing them in his mind.* Desirous of beholding Nārāyana, he began to reside there, attentively engaged in the silent recitation of *mantras* sacred to him, and observant the while of vows of the most difficult kind.² With concentrated mind, the regenerate Rishi, with arms upraised, stood in Yoga, and then

* The Burdwan translator, as also K. P. Singha, both err in translating the first line of this Verse. It does *not* mean that Nārada worshipped them with a bend of his head and that they in return worshipped him mentally.—T.

sang the following hymn unto the Lord of the universe, Him, viz., who is at once the soul of attributes and divested of all attributes.*

“Nārada said,—Salutations to thee, O God of gods, O thou that art freed from all acts! Thou art he who is divested of all attributes, who is the Witness of all the worlds, who is called Kshetrajna, who is the foremost of all Beings, who is Infinite, who is called Purusha, who is the great Purusha, who is the foremost of all Purushas, who is the soul of the three attributes, who is called the Foremost, who is Amrita (nectar), who is called Immortal, who is called Ananta (Cesha), who is Space,* who is without beginning, who is both Manifest and Unmanifest as existent and not-existent things, who is said to have his home in Truth,† who is the first of gods (Nārāyana), who is the giver of wealth (or of the fruits of acts), who is identified with Daksha and other Lords of the Creation, who is the Aṣwattha and other big trees, who is the four-headed Brahman, who is the Lord of all created Beings, who is the Lord of Speech,‡ who is the Lord of the universe (or Indra), who is the all-pervading Soul, who is the Sun, who is the breath called Prāna, who is the Lord of the waters (viz., Varuna), who is identifiable with the Emperor or the King, who is identifiable with the Regents of the several points of the compass, who is the refuge of the universe when it is dissolved in the final destruction,\$ who is Undisplayed (unrevealed), who is the giver of the Vedas unto Brahman, who is identifiable with the sacrifices and Vedic studies achieved by Brāhmanas with the aid of their bodies, who is identifiable with the four principal orders of the deities, who is every one of those four

* In the sense of His being unmodified, even as space is an entity that cannot be modified in any way.—T.

† I. e., as the Commentator expands, who is displayed without any modification, all else being modifications of Thyself.—T.

‡ I. e., from whom speech has flowed, or who is Vrihaspati the celestial priest, so famous for his learning and intelligence.—T.

\$ I. e. the original home of the universe. The idea is that when the universal dissolution comes, all things take refuge in thee. I follow the Commentator in all the interpretations he gives.—T.

orders, who is possessed of effulgence, who is possessed of great effulgence, who is he unto whom the seven largest offerings in sacrifices are presented with the Gāyatri and other sacred *mantras*, who is Yama, who is Chitragupta and the other attendants of Yama, who is called the wife of Yama, who is that order of the deities called Tushita, who is that other order called Mahā-Tushita, who is the universal grinder (Death), who is desire and all diseases that have been created for aiding the advent of Death, who is health and freedom from disease, who is subject to desire and passions, who is free from the influence of desire and passions, who is Infinite as exhibited in species and forms, who is he that is chastised, who is he that is the chastiser, who is all the lesser sacrifices (like Agnihotra and others), who is all the larger sacrifices (like those called Brahma, &c.), who is all the Ritwijas, who is the origin of all sacrifices (*viz.*, the Vedas), who is fire, who is the very heart of all sacrifices (*viz.*, the *mantras* and hymns uttered in them), who is he that is hymned in sacrifices, who takes those shares of the sacrificial offerings that are presented to him, who is the embodiment of the five sacrifices, who is the maker of the five sections or divisions of time (*viz.*, day, night, month, seasons, and year), who is incapable of being understood except by those scriptures that are called *Pancharātra*, who never shrinks from anything, who is unvanquished, who is only Mind (without a physical frame), who is known only by name, who is the Lord of Brahman himself, who has completed all the vows and observances mentioned in the Vedas,* who is the swan (bearer of the triple stick), who is the great swan (bearer of the single stick), who is the foremost of swans (divested of stick), who is the foremost of all sacrifices, who is Sāṅkhya-yoga, who is the embodiment of the Sāṅkhya philosophy, who dwells in all Jivas, who lives in every heart, who resides in every sense, who floats on the ocean-water, who lives in the Vedas, who lies on the lotus (the image of the egg whence the universe has sprung), who is the Lord of the universe,

* *I. e.*, who has performed the 'avabhṛita' or final bath upon the completion of all vows and observances and sacrifices.—T.

and whose troops go everywhere for protecting his worshippers! Thou takest birth as all creatures! Thou art the origin of the universe (of all creatures)! Thy mouth is fire! Thou art that fire which courses through the waters of the ocean, issuing out all the while from an Equine head! Thou art the sanctified butter that is poured into the sacrificial fire! Thou art the car-driver (fire or heat that impels the body and causes it to live and grow)! Thou art *Vashat*! Thou art the syllable *Om*! Thou art Penances! Thou art Mind! Thou art *Chandramas*! Thou sanctifiest the sacrificial butter! Thou art the Sun! Thou art the Elephants that are stationed in the four cardinal points of the compass! Thou illuminest the cardinal points of the compass. Thou illuminest the subsidiary points also! Thou art the Equine head! Thou art the first three mantras of the *Rig Veda*! Thou art the protector of the several orders of men (*viz.*, *Brāhmanas*, *Kshatriyas*, *Vaiçyas*, and *Cudras*)! Thou art the five fires (beginning with *Gārhapatya*)! Thou art He who has thrice ignited the sacrificial fire called *Nāchi*!* Thou art the refuge of the six limbs (*viz.*, the *Vedas*).† Thou art the foremost of those *Brāhmanas* that are employed in singing the *Sāmans* in sacrifices and other religious rites. Thou art *Prāgjyotish*, and thou art he who sings the first *Sāman*!‡ Thou art the observer of those vows that depend upon the *Vedas* and that are observed by singers of *Sāmans*. Thou art the embodiment of the *Upanishad* called by the name of *Atharvaçiras*. Thou art he who is the topic of the five foremost of scriptures (*viz.*, those that appertain to the worship of *Surya*, of *Cakti*, of *Ganeça*, of *Civa*, and of *Vishnu*)! Thou art called the preceptor that subsists only on the froth of water. Thou art a *Vālikhilya*.§

* *I. e.*, thou hast performed sacrifices.—T.

† The *Vedas* have six limbs or divisions.—T.

‡ *Prāgjyotish* is the name of a particular *Sāman*. The *Rich* beginning with 'Murddhānam &c.', when sung, comes to be called by the name of 'jeshtha *Sāman*'. What is said here, therefore, is that thou art both the foremost of *Sāmans* and he that sings that *Sāman*.—T.

§ In the Bombay text, the reading for '*Vaināgarbha*' is '*Vaikhāpasa*' which means a class or sect of ascetics.—T.

Thou art the embodiment of him who has not fallen away from Yoga. Thou art the embodiment of correctness of judgment or reasoning. Thou art the beginning of the Yugas, thou art the middle of the Yugas and thou art their end! Thou art Ākhandala (Indra). Thou art the two Rishis Prāchina-garbha and Kauçika! Thou art Purusthuta, thou art Puruhuta, thou art the artificer of the universe. Thou hast the universe for thy form. Thy motions are infinite. Thy bodies are infinite! Thou art without end and without beginning, and without middle. Thy middle is unmanifest. Thy end is unmanifest. Thou hast vows for thy abode. Thou residest in the ocean. Thy hast thy home in Fame, in Penances, in Self-restraint, in Prosperity, in Knowledge, in grand Achievements, and in Everything belonging to the universe! Thou art Vāsudeva. Thou art the grantor of every wish. Thou art the Ape that bore Rāma on his shoulders. Thou art the great Horse-sacrifice. Thou takest thy share of offerings made in great sacrifices!* Thou art the grantor of boons, of happiness, of wealth. Thou art devoted to Hari! Thou art Restraint of the senses. Thou art vows and observances. Thou art mortifications, thou art severe mortifications, thou art very severe mortifications.† Thou art he who observes vows and religious and other pious rites. Thou art freed from all errors. Thou art a Brahmachārin. Thou tookest birth in the womb of Priçni. Thou art he from whom have flowed all Vedic rites and acts. Thou art unborn. Thou pervadest all things. Thy eyes are on all things. Thou must not be apprehended by the senses. Thou art not subject to deterioration. Thou art possessed of great puissance. Thy body is inconceivably vast. Thou art holy, thou art very holy. Thou art golden. Thou art vast. Thou art beyond the ken of logic or argument. Thou art unknow-

* The Commentator explains that by 'Mahāyajna'—great sacrifice—is meant 'Yoga'. The Jiva-Soul is like the libation poured in that sacrifice, for by Yoga the Jiva-Soul is annihilated and merged into the Supreme Soul.—T.

† In treatises on the *Smṛiti*, the indications of these three kinds or degrees of mortifications are given.—T.

able. Thou art the foremost of Causes. Thou art the Creator of all creatures and thou art their destroyer. Thou art the possessor of vast powers of illusion. Thou art called Chittraçikhandin. Thou art the giver of boons. Thou art the taker of thy share of the sacrificial offerings. Thou hast obtained the merit of all sacrifices. Thou art he who has been freed from all doubts. Thou art omnipresent. Thou art of the form of a Brāhmaṇa. Thou art fond of Brāhmaṇas. Thou hast the universe for thy form. Thy form is very vast. Thou art the greatest friend. Thou art kind to all thy worshippers. Thou art the great deity of the Brāhmaṇas. I am thy devoted disciple. I am desirous of beholding thee. Salutations to thee that art of the form of Eman-cipation !—' "

SECTION CCCXL.

"Bhishma said,—'Thus hymned with names that were not known to others, the Divine Nārāyana having the universe for his form showed himself to the ascetic Nārada.¹ His form was somewhat purer than the moon and differed from the moon in some respects. He somewhat resembled a blazing fire in complexion. The puissant Lord was somewhat of the form of Vishti.*² He resembled in some respects the feathers of the parrot, and in some a mass of pure crystal. He resembled in some respects a hill of antimony and in some a mass of pure gold.³ His complexion somewhat resembled the coral when first formed, and was somewhat white. In some respects that complexion resembled the hue of gold and in some that of the *lapis lazulus*.⁴ In some respects it resembled the hue of the blue *lapis lazulus* and in some that of sapphire. In some respects it resembled the hue of the peacock's neck, and in some that of a string of pearls.⁵ Bearing these diverse kinds of hues on his person, the eternal Deity appeared before Nārada. He had a thousand

* By this word is meant a particular conjunction of heavenly bodies. This conjunction is represented as having a peculiar form.—T.

eyes and was possessed of great beauty. He had a hundred heads and a hundred feet.⁶ He had a thousand stomachs and a thousand arms. He seemed to be still inconceivable to the mind. With one of his mouths he uttered the syllable *Om* and then the *Gāyatri* following *Om*.⁷ With mind under complete control, the great Deity, called by the names of *Hari* and *Nārāyana*, by his other mouths, multitudinous in number, uttered many *mantras* from the four Vedas which are known by the name of *Aranyaka*.⁸ The Lord of all the deities, the great God who is adored in sacrifices, held in his hands a sacrificial altar, a *Kamandalu*, a few white gems, a pair of shoes, a bundle of *Kuṣa* blades, a deer-skin, a tooth-stick, and a little blazing fire.*⁹ With a cheerful soul, that foremost of regenerate persons, viz., *Nārada*, restraining speech, bowed unto the great God and adored Him.¹⁰ Unto him whose head was still bent low in veneration, the first of all the deities, who is free from deterioration, said the following words.¹¹

“The Holy one said,—The great Rishis, *Ekata*, *Dwita*, and *Trita*, came to this realm from desire of obtaining a sight of me.¹² They, however, were unable to have the fruition of their wishes. Nor can any one have a sight of me save those persons that are devoted to me with their whole hearts. As regards thee, thou art verily the foremost of all persons devoted to me with all their souls.¹³ These are my bodies, the best ones that I assume. These were born, O regenerate one, in the house of *Dharma*. Do thou worship them always, and do thou perform those rites that are laid down in the ordinances with respect to that worship.¹⁴ O *Brāhmaṇa*, do thou ask of me the boons thou desirest! I am gratified with thee today, and I appear unto thee now in my universal form as freed from decay and deterioration!—¹⁵

* The word ‘*Upānaha*’ used here in the dual number, has puzzled many persons. It is difficult to conceive why the great God should appear with a pair of shoes in one of his hands. Probably, the ‘*Upānaha*’, in ancient times, was a wooden sandal, and what the poet means to say is that *Nārāyana* appeared with all the requisites of a *Brahmachārin* on his person,—T.

“Nārada said,—Since, O holy one, I have today succeeded in obtaining a sight of thee, I regard that I have won without any delay the fruits of my penances, O God, of my self-restraint, and of all the vows and observances that I have gone through!¹⁶ This, indeed, is the highest boon thou hast granted me for thou hast shown thyself to me today, O Eternal Lord! Thou, O holy one, hast the universe for thy eye! Thou art the Lion. Thy form is identifiable with everything! Possessed of puissance, thou, O Lord, art vast and infinite!—¹⁷”

“Bhishma continued,—‘Having thus shown Himself unto Nārada the son of Parameshthi, the great God addressed that ascetic and said,—Go hence, O Nārada, and do not delay!¹⁸ These worshippers of mine, possessed of lunar complexions, are divested of all senses and do not subsist upon any kind of food. They are, again, all Emancipate! With minds wholly concentrated upon me, people should think of me. Such worshippers will never meet with any impediments.¹⁹ These men are all crowned with ascetic success and are highly blessed. In ancient times they became entirely devoted to me. They have been freed from the attributes of Rajas and Tamas. Without doubt, they are competent to enter me and become merged into my Self.²⁰ He that cannot be seen with the eye, touched with the sense of touch, smelt with the sense of scent, and that is beyond the ken of the sense of taste,²¹ He whom the three attributes of Swattwa, Rajas, and Tamas do not touch, who pervades all things and is the one Witness of the universe, and who is described as the Soul of the entire universe,²² He who is not destroyed upon the destruction of the bodies of all created things, who is unborn and unchangeable and eternal, who is freed from all attributes, who is indivisible and entire,²³ He who transcends the twice twelve topics of enquiry and is regarded the Twentyfifth, who is called by the name of Purusha, who is inactive, and who is said to be apprehended by Knowledge alone,²⁴ He into whom the foremost of regenerate persons enter and become emancipate, He is the eternal Supreme Soul and is known by the name of Vāsudeva.²⁵ Behold, O Nārada, the greatness and

puissance of that God ! He is never touched by acts good or bad.²⁶ Swattwa, Rajas, and Tamas, are said to be the three (original) attributes. These dwell and act in the bodies of all creatures.²⁷ The Jiva-soul, called Kshetrajna, enjoys and endures the action of these three attributes. He, however, transcends them and they cannot touch Him. Freed from these attributes, He is again their enjoyer and endurer. Having created them Himself, He is above them all.²⁸ O celestial Rishi, the Earth, which is the refuge of the universe, disappears* (when the hour for universal dissolution comes) into water. Water disappears into Light, and Light into Wind.²⁹ Wind disappears into Space, and Space into Mind. Mind is a great creature, and it disappears into Unmanifest Prakriti.³⁰ Unmanifest Prakriti, O Brāhmana, disappears into inactive Purusha. There is nothing higher than Purusha which is Eternal.³¹ There is nothing among mobile and immobile things in the universe that is Immutable, except Vāsudeva, the eternal Purusha.³² Endued with great puissance, Vāsudeva is the Soul of all creatures. Earth, Wind, Space, Water, and Light forming the fifth,³³ are primal elements of great puissance. Mingling together they form what is called the body. Possessed of subtile prowess and invisible to all eyes, O Brāhmana, the puissant Vāsudeva then enters that combination of the five primal elements called body. Such entrance is called his birth, and taking birth He causes the body to move about and act.³⁴ Without a combination of the five primal elements, no body can ever be formed.³⁵ Without, again, the entrance of Jiva into the body, the mind dwelling within it cannot cause it to move and act. He that enters the body is possessed of great puissance and is called Jiva. He is known also by other names, viz., Cesha and Sankarshana.³⁶ He that takes his rise, from that Sankasarshana, by his own acts, Sanatkumāra, and in whom all creatures merge when the universal dissolution comes, is the Mind of all creatures and is called by the name of Praddyumna.³⁷ From Him (*i. e.*, Pradyumna), arises He

* *I. e.*, merges into.—T.

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